THE PAYOFF

Writing grant proposals that fund your ideas. Page 40

NOVEMBER 2007

nea today

A Tale of Three Sisters

Why these smart, talented students are struggling to get a diploma.

SEE PAGE 26

nea
NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
nea.org
Great Public Schools for Every Child

Lovingly aged to perfection. Hints of woody Yosemite. Soft tones of Vail in the fall. And a touch of PCH. NEA members can savor this classic automobile for an APR of only 3.9%*. Open up, and let breathe.

Certified
PreLoved Volkswagens

©2007 Volkswagen of America, Inc. *This special APR is available on 2002 to 2007 CPL vehicles. 60-month financing available to highest level with approved credit through Volkswagen Credit. Example: For every $1,000 financed over 60 months, $18.37 is due. Down payment may be required. Visit your local Volkswagen dealer, and use your NEA membership card to take advantage of this offer. Supplies limited. Offer ends December 31, 2007. See dealer for details.

neatoday | features

> VOLUME 26 > NUMBER 3 > NOVEMBER 2007

26 | DROPOUT CRISIS

A Tale of Three Sisters

COVER STORY There is one fundamental question for the Pele sisters this year: Will they stay in school, or won't they? Dive into our first story in a series on dropout prevention.

33 | INTEGRATION

Is Desegregation Dead?

Where there is a will, there still might be a way. The Supreme Court nixed integration by race, but some districts are turning to income mixing instead.

36 | PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Best and Worst

Like the girl with the curl in the middle of her forehead, when professional training is good it is very good, but when it is bad it is horrid.

38 | SERVICE LEARNING

Making the Connection

Electronic trash hauling! Stargazing! Today's community service programs are anything but dull. Students are learning as they boost their communities, and, *gasp*, have fun.

40 | TRY THIS!

Write a Grant

Got a great idea for your school or students? With a little smart writing and strategizing, someone else can pick up the tab.

Better late than never.

You can still make sure you have enough life insurance.

A Policy of Caring

THINK LIFE

More than half of NEA members are underinsured. You may be, too. Unlike homeowner's or auto insurance, there's no law saying you have to have enough life insurance to protect your family, so it's easy to put off getting the right coverage.

Because we are dedicated to the financial well being of our members and their families, we would like to encourage you to seize this opportunity to make a change. We can help you assess your current coverage and make informed decisions about protecting your family's future.

You should be asking, "How much coverage is enough? What types of plans and terms are right for my stage in life?" To find answers to all your questions as well as free online decision-making tools, including the NEA Life Insurance Needs Estimator, visit our Web Site at **neamb.com/thinklife**.

NEA Members Insurance Trust®

TRNT1107

neatoday | departments

> VOLUME 26 > NUMBER 3 > NOVEMBER 2007

6 | **TALKBACK**

7 | **EDITOR'S NOTE**

9 | **PRESIDENT'S VIEWPOINT**

11 | **IN YOUR WORDS**
What is the best part of your school day?

13 | **UPFRONT**
What's good for students with special needs might work for all.

20 | **LEADING THE WAY**
NEA urges legislators to take their time and get it right.

23 | **ESP**
Bus drivers earn respect in talks with school district.

25 | **JONATHAN KOZOL**
The veteran author shares his letters to a young teacher.

42 | **BULLETIN BOARD**

45 | **THE GUIDE**
Plug in to handy gadgets that can save you time; organize digital pics like a pro.

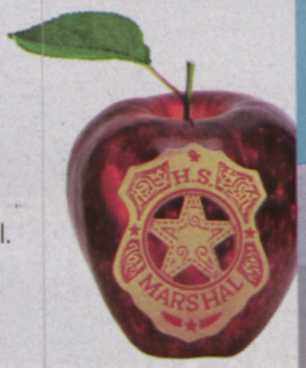
49 | **IN PERSON**

51 | **RESOURCES**

64 | **LAST BELL**

57 | EDUCATION MARKET

63 | MARKETPLACE



13

45

20

"They had faith and trust and respect for our ESPs." 23

42

49

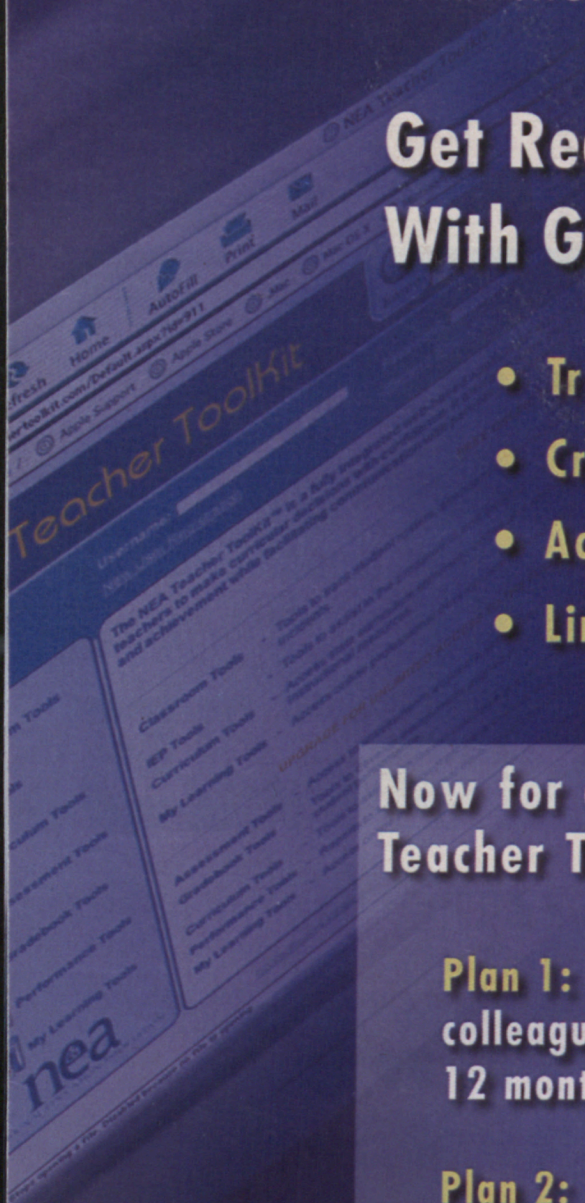
COVER PHOTO: PHILIP SPALDING III/PHOTOPLANT; ART DIRECTION: GROFF CREATIVE, INC.; STYLING: SABRINA HOLCOMB

PHOTOS PAGE 1:
FROM TOP: PHILIP SPALDING III/PHOTOPLANT; CHARLES VOTAW, COMPUTERS; SAM UPSHAW, COACH

PHOTOS PAGE 3:
FROM TOP: MEIKO ARQUILLOS, SANDY SCHAEFFER, ALAN ZALE

NEA Teacher ToolKit™

www.neateachertoolkit.com



Get Ready for the New School Year With Great Savings on Cool Online Tools

- Track Student Progress
- Create IEP's
- Access Test Items
- Link Your Gradebook to Your State Standards

Now for a limited time only, you can access ALL Teacher Toolkit tools at greatly reduced prices!

Plan 1: Subscribe to the advanced tools with four colleagues and receive all the great TTK tools for 12 months for $20 per person — a total savings of $250.

Plan 2: Receive three months free and a reduced monthly fee of only $5.95 subscribing by November 15, 2007.

To learn more about the NEA Teacher Toolkit and these great savings go to:

www.neateachertoolkit.com

nea NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION nea.org

Great Public Schools for Every Child

> NCLB

READ THE LATEST NEWS ON NCLB REAUTHORIZATION.
www.nea.org/ref?NCLB

TOP CLICKS

I Am an Educator

In our new video series, educators reflect on school life and why they chose the finest profession in the world. **www.nea.org/ref?iamaneducator**

Inside McKinley High School

Students at a Hawaiian high school with a high dropout rate share stories about crime, gangs, and the challenges facing Native Hawaiian and Asian Pacific Islander students. **www.nea.org/ref?mckinley**

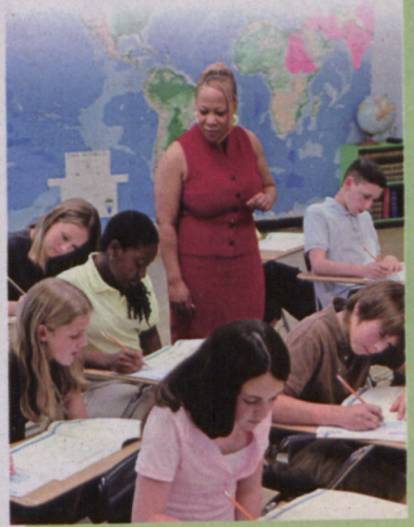
Show Me the Money!

Get tips from the experts about earning grant money for your ideas, along with sample grant proposals.
www.nea.org/ref?grants

Get The Latest from NEA Blogs

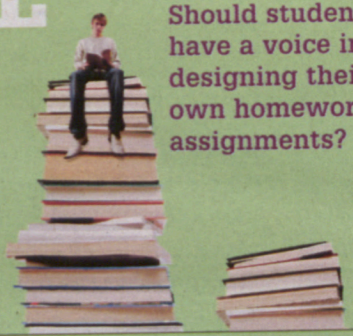
TIPS AND TRICKS
Find practical classroom tips from teachers like you at
www.nea.org/ref?works4me

EDUCATION NEWS
Up-to-the-Minute!
NEA Today staff writers bring you the news, trends, and issues facing education. Check out their daily updates at
www.nea.org/ref?ednotes



POLL

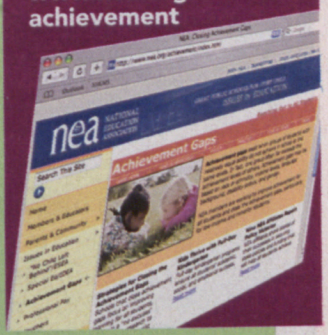
Should students have a voice in designing their own homework assignments?



WHAT'S NEW ON nea.org

CLOSING THE GAP

Find out how NEA members are working to improve achievement for all students, particularly for low-income and minority students.
www.nea.org/achievement



NOW YOU'RE TALKING

Media Disclosing Teacher Salaries

Since teacher salaries are paid with public dollars, I believe the public has a right to see a school's salary schedule. My salary does not need to be disclosed, but the schedule and a notation of the number of teachers at each step/lane placement should be enough information.

Language Education

Children need to learn a second language beginning in the third grade and then add the third language in the fifth grade. Why? Because in order to keep up with a global economy and to compete with students graduating in other countries, they need to be multilingual.

WHAT HAVE YOU HEARD? *Speak out on our discussion forums to debate education issues or share your stories and strategies at* **www.nea.org/forums.**

BLOG: JOCELYN AUGUSTINO; TOP CLICKS: DAVID CLARK; POLL: ATTSETSKI; NOW YOUR TALKING: FOTO FACTORY

talk back

Staying at Home and Happy

In response to Leslie Bennetts ("Q&A," October): I have been blessed with many fulfilling experiences in my lifetime, such as being co-valedictorian in high school, graduating *summa cum laude* from college, and landing my dream job straight out of school. However, I have never felt as fulfilled as I do now, as a stay-at-home mom. I am still passionate about teaching. My daughter and I go for nature hikes, explore our favorite stories, and investigate the mysteries of the sky on a starry night. As my husband says, "You can always return to teaching, but you cannot go back and raise our child!"

NATALIE M. WADDLE
Washington Court House, Ohio

A STRONG UNION

The "President's Viewpoint: A Fundamental Right to Fairness," and the accompanying accounts of unfounded accusations against teachers and school employees described in the article "In Your Corner" (October) illustrate how, in this day when so many people are looking to place blame far from themselves, union membership is essential.

ALAN W. RIGERMAN
Miami, Florida

EDUCATORS IN POP CULTURE

I enjoyed your article "Pop Goes the Educator" (October), but wondered about some multiple season TV programs such as *Room 222*, which featured Denise Nicholas in a high-profile African American role, and *The White Shadow*, which featured a multi-ethnic setting. Finally, I would mention Miss Kinnian, the school teacher in *Charly*, starring Cliff Robertson. All might be deserving of mention when we examine popular culture's depiction of teachers.

TIM TELFER
Diamond Bar, California

I loved the article, but how could you have overlooked "Teacher" by Jethro Tull or "Another Brick In The Wall" by Pink Floyd?

KIPTON MEINHARDT
Ilwaco, Washington

MAKE ROOM FOR THE BIBLE

It is nice to hear that certain school districts around the country find nothing wrong with including the Holy Bible in their curriculum ("Upfront," September). As a middle school teacher for the past 30 years I can say one thing: We need more morals in our schools. Schools today have to teach the students what they call social skills or character education. What a shame that children need this subject in their studies. The article in your magazine was refreshing and uplifting.

LUCIAN DURSO
Commack, New York

MORE GPO/WEP OUTRAGE

As a retired Massachusetts teacher, I was pleased to see that NEA is still working on the repeal of the GPO and WEP ("Upfront," September). I, of course, am not entitled to any Social Security benefits since teachers in Massachusetts do not pay into the system. However, I am appalled that I am not allowed to get survivor's benefits from my husband, who gave his life in Vietnam. Prior to his leaving, we were promised that if he should be KIA the government would provide SS benefits until I went to work (very shortly after his death) and then I would be reinstated when I retired. So much for taking care of our veterans and their families!

BETTY PORRAZZO
Venice, Florida

Corrections: In the September issue, an article about ESP of the Year Veronica Henderson stated that the ESP membership was 383,000. The ESP membership is now 478,053.

The article "Prison Drama" reported that the recidivism rate for Ohio prisoners is 60 percent. The rate is actually 38 percent.

NEA Today (ISSN 0734-7219) is published eight times a year, monthly, in September, October, November, January, February, March, April, and May by the National Education Association, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036-3290.

Periodicals postage paid at Washington, D.C., and additional mailing offices.

Postmaster: Send address changes to *NEA Today*, Attn: NEA Financial & Membership Services Address Change, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036. Telephone: (202) 822-7065.

NEA Today is mailed to all NEA members as a benefit of membership. Nonmember subscription prices: $65 for institution subscriptions; $100 for individual domestic and foreign subscriptions. For members, subscriptions represent $4.55 of annual dues.

Advertising within *NEA Today* is screened, but the publishing of any advertisement does not imply NEA endorsement of the product or views expressed.

Need to change your address?

Please send your address to NEA FMS:

BY MAIL:
NEA Financial & Membership Services
Attn: Address Change
1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036

BY FAX: (202) 822-7669

ON THE WEB: www.neatoday.org

LET'S TALK

Share your ideas, comments, and opinions with *NEA Today* in one of four ways: By Mail: Write to Letters, *NEA Today*, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036 Through the Web: Go to www.nea.org/neatoday, click on "Feedback," and fill in the "Letter to the Editor" section. By e-mail: Write to neatoday@nea.org By Fax: (202) 822-7206 *Letters are edited for length and clarity.*

YOUNG LIVES AT THE CROSSROADS

Most of us had a best friend from high school or even earlier whose life ended up on a completely different path from our own. Some choices along the way—what to wear, whom to date, what to do after school—probably had limited impact. But there was at least one definitive fork in the road: Finishing high school, or not. That decision affects everything from college opportunities to careers to whether best friends really are forever (or "BFF" as your students and children say).

What factors determine who will get a diploma, and who won't? The Pele sisters in our cover story (see page 26) show just how complicated a question that is. Smart, confident, with strong family support, these girls have already started down different paths in their young lives. Check out **www.nea.org/ref?hawaii** for video and audio of what life is like for them and their teachers. And visit **www.nea.org/dropout/** to see what NEA is doing about the fact that 30 percent of high school students drop out before graduation—that's one million young people every year. That's a million BFFs who should be headed down the right path.

PUBLISHER LEONA HIRAOKA
lhiraoka@nea.org

neatoday www.neatoday.org

NEA CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER AND EXECUTIVE PUBLISHER
Jan Collins

PUBLISHER AND DIRECTOR, INTERACTIVE MEDIA
Leona Hiraoka

MANAGER, MANUFACTURING AND PRODUCTION
Bill Fischer

MANAGER, NEA.ORG
Lavonne Luquis

MANAGER, ADMINISTRATION
Earline Spence

WRITERS/EDITORS
Michelle Chovan, Mary Ellen Flannery, Sabrina Holcomb, Alain Jehlen, Cynthia Kopkowski, Con Lehane, Amanda Litvinov, John Rosales, Tim Walker

NEA.ORG
Paula Chavez-Talley, Sheala Durant, Bonnie Gardner, Joe Hammond, Cindy Long, Debbie Padgett, Brad Ritter, Karen Zauber

ART DIRECTION
Groff Creative Inc.

PRODUCTION
Marsha Blackburn, Christian Lopez, Alice Trued

DIRECTOR, MARKETING & INFORMATION SERVICES
Lynn Coffin

ADVERTISING COORDINATOR
Branita Griffin Henson

ADVERTISING SALES
Rich Datz
rdatz@educationworld.com
(856) 983-7199

ADMINISTRATION
Nicole Pinkney, Liza Soviak, John Young

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
Kevin Savetz

INTERNS
Truphena Choti, Maren MacIntyre, Danielle Taylor

LOCAL EDITOR ADVISORY BOARD 2007–08: Rosita Force, Omaha Education Association (Nebraska); Laura Fridley, Fairfax Education Association (Virginia); Clifford Kusaba, Teachers Association of Long Beach (California); Lucian Daryl Roberson, Caddo Association of Educators (Louisiana); Eric Stinson, Educational Assistants of Cherry Hill (New Jersey); Louis Lessor, Sun Prairie Education Association (Wisconsin)

We are interested in hearing your feedback:

MAIL: *NEA Today*, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036
E-MAIL: neatoday@nea.org FAX: (202) 822-7206 PHONE: (202) 822-7207

Enhance your career with Cal U's 100% online programs

California University of Pennsylvania's online programs were created for you...the busy working professional looking to advance your career, but unable to fit traditional classroom study into your schedule.

Master of Arts Teaching Program helps you expand your teaching skills. It correlates with the five core propositions of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and provides information about national certification.

The Administrative Program for Principals provides a personalized approach whether you are seeking principal's certification, a master's degree, or want to enhance your teaching and leadership skills.

The Superintendent Letter of Eligibility Program can be completed in seven semesters at times that are convenient for you.

For more information, call 866-595-6348, e-mail calugo@cup.edu or visit **www.cup.edu/go.**

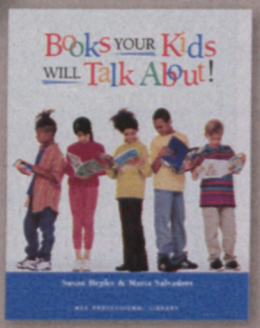
California University of Pennsylvania is accredited by the Commission on Higher Education of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools and the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education.

CAL U
GLOBAL ONLINE
California University of Pennsylvania
Building Character. Building Careers.
A proud member of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education.

The NEA Professional Library...

THE Bookstore for Educators

- Research-based
- Practical information and techniques



NEA Professional Library books can help you and your colleagues manage classrooms, inspire students and transform learning.

Whatever your role is in education, the *NEA Professional Library* is a great source for books and other resources that speak directly to the challenges you and your colleagues face in schools and classrooms across the nation.

Visit us online at www.nea.org/books.

nea NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION nea.org

Great Public Schools for Every Child

nea NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION nea.org

Great Public Schools for Every Child

NEA PRESIDENT
Reg Weaver

NEA VICE PRESIDENT
Dennis Van Roekel

NEA SECRETARY-TREASURER
Lily Eskelsen

NEA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Mike Billirakis, Ohio
Mark Cebulski, Wisconsin
Carolyn Crowder, Oklahoma
Lily Eskelsen, Utah
Christy Levings, Kansas
Paula Monroe, California
Marsha Smith, Maryland
Dennis Van Roekel, Arizona
Reg Weaver, Illinois

NEA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
John Wilson

THE NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

We, the members of the National Education Association of the United States, are the voice of education professionals. Our work is fundamental to the nation, and we accept the profound trust placed in us.

OUR VISION

Our vision is a great public school for every student.

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to advocate for education professionals and to unite our members and the nation to fulfill the promise of public education to prepare every student to succeed in a diverse and interdependent world.

OUR CORE VALUES

These principles guide our work and define our mission:

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY. We believe public education is the gateway to opportunity. All students have the human and civil right to a quality public education that develops their potential, independence, and character.

A JUST SOCIETY. We believe public education is vital to building respect for the worth, dignity, and equality of every individual in our diverse society.

DEMOCRACY. We believe public education is the cornerstone of our republic. Public education provides individuals with the skills to be involved, informed, and engaged in our representative democracy.

PROFESSIONALISM. We believe that the expertise and judgment of education professionals are critical to student success. We maintain the highest professional standards, and we expect the status, compensation, and respect due all professionals.

PARTNERSHIP. We believe partnerships with parents, families, communities, and other stakeholders are essential to quality public education and student success.

COLLECTIVE ACTION. We believe individuals are strengthened when they work together for the common good. As education professionals, we improve both our professional status and the quality of public education when we unite and advocate collectively.

EVERY COIN HAS TWO SIDES

Uncovering the Model Minority Myth

What group comes to mind when you read the following: top of the class, high test scores, and hard working?

If you guessed Asian Americans, you are seeing the power of the "model minority" stereotype. It is true that Asian Americans, examined statistically as a single group, have in many ways done extraordinarily well. Among the major racial and ethnic minority groups in the U.S., Asian Americans have the highest rate of college degree attainment, the highest number of advanced degrees, and the highest percentage of workers in high-skill occupations.

Because of this success, some have held Asian Americans out as the defining example of what it means to achieve the American dream, declaring Asian Americans as the "model minority."

Yet, if we take a closer look at the numbers, they reveal a more complex side to this remarkable story. Without question, the model minority myth has camouflaged the unique history and socioeconomic characteristics of widely-differing Asian American and Pacific Islander communities. In particular, it has hidden the widespread challenges facing Southeast Asian and Pacific Islanders in the public education system.

This month we explore the dropout crisis through the eyes of three sisters who attend McKinley High School in Hawaii, which has the highest percentage of Asian Pacific Islanders in the country. NEA members in Hawaii point to cultural and language barriers in the classroom as well as prejudice and unrealistic expectations as contributors to the academic hurdles faced by Asian Pacific Islander students and the high school's 15 percent dropout rate.

The myth that all Asian Americans are high-achievers can be detrimental because it fails to address those students who need help, support, and focused resources to succeed. Team NEA, to continue to allow these challenges to go unnoticed and unaddressed would be irresponsible and perilous to a community that is seeking our help.

In response, we are urging a number of initiatives to improve API achievement. They include expanding the research on APIs by disaggregating the data and experiences of each ethnicity. This will lead to the creation of support services and instruction where they are most needed.

NEA also supports federal policies to ensure schools have more capacity to serve English-language learners and to ensure that there is more outreach to API parents, including bilingual support.

Providing every child, regardless of race, income or ethnicity, with a quality education is a basic right that our public schools and policymakers must deliver. To make this happen, we must provide all students with the tools to fulfill their limitless potential.

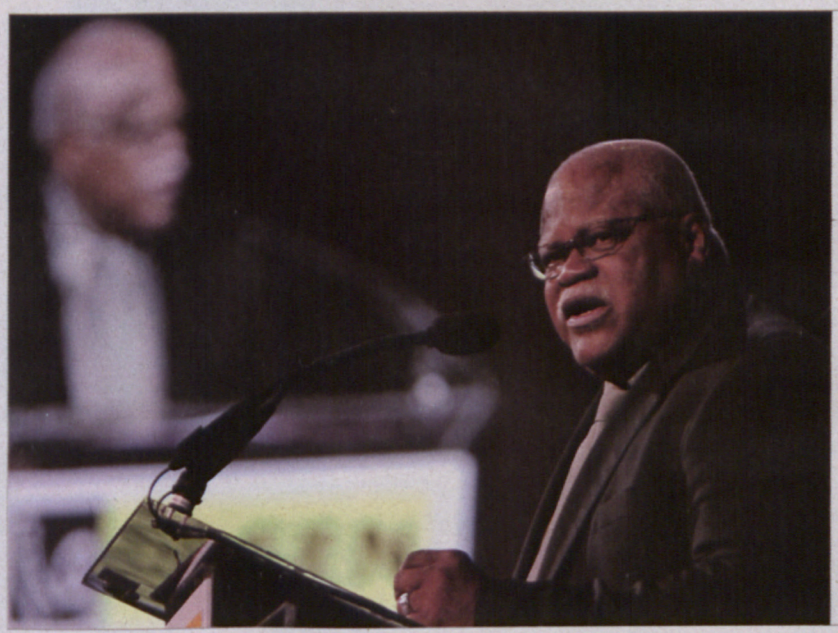
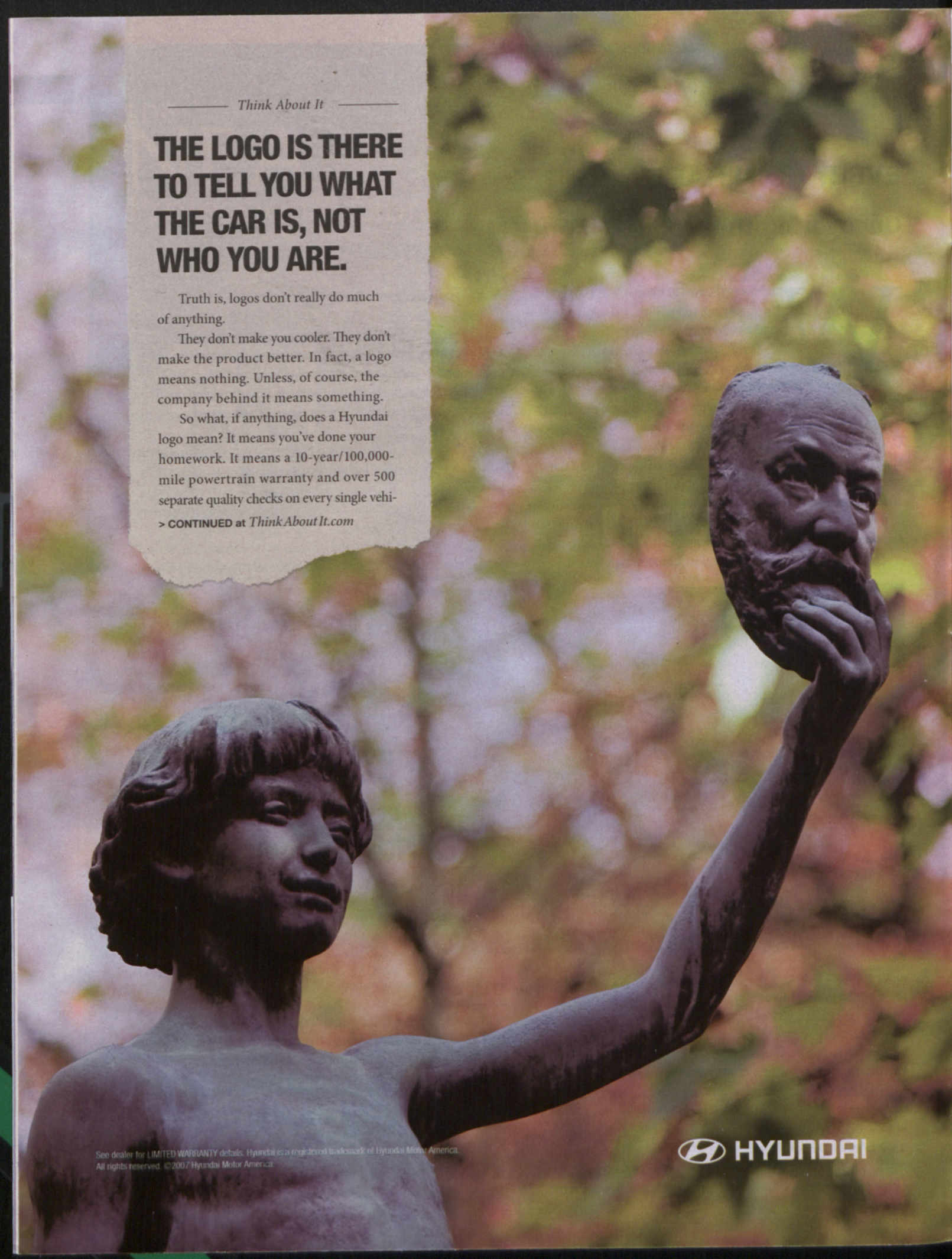


PHOTO: DIMA GAVRYSH

> "The myth that all Asian Americans are high-achievers can be detrimental because it fails to address those students who need help, support, and focused resources to succeed."
>
> —Reg Weaver

Reg Weaver

NEA PRESIDENT REG WEAVER


Think About It
THE LOGO IS THERE TO TELL YOU WHAT THE CAR IS, NOT WHO YOU ARE.
Truth is, logos don't really do much of anything.
They don't make you cooler. They don't make the product better. In fact, a logo means nothing. Unless, of course, the company behind it means something.
So what, if anything, does a Hyundai logo mean? It means you've done your homework. It means a 10-year/100,000-mile powertrain warranty and over 500 separate quality checks on every single vehi-
> CONTINUED at ThinkAboutIt.com
See dealer for LIMITED WARRANTY details. Hyundai is a registered trademark of Hyundai Motor America.
All rights reserved. ©2007 Hyundai Motor America.
HYUNDAI

It's when I'm standing outside my room talking to students as they travel to their classes. It's my time to relax and recharge as I catch up on their lives, notice new outfits and hairstyles, and share jokes. I didn't think it made much of an impact on the students until I was absent a few days last year. When I returned, a girl whose locker was near my room told me, "I missed you. I didn't get my daily compliment." Then I realized I could make it the best part of a student's day, too.

LINDA GOODWIN, *English teacher, Celina, Ohio*

During our Vocational Skills class, my special education students deliver copies of the *San Antonio Express-News* to classes who have ordered them through the "Newspapers in Education" program. They practice greeting teachers and fellow students, entering a room quietly, and placing items in the designated area. The best part is that everyone gets to know my students by name. I love watching the interaction.

EMILY R. SHIERK, *special education teacher, San Antonio, Texas*

The best part of my day is when a child who is acting out re-channels his or her anger and frustration into a hug. What a change in energy! Sometimes it takes a while to get there, but it's worth it when it finally happens.

BONNIE LUDWIG, *kindergarten teacher, Ellicott City, Maryland*

I always have a few students who make a point to stop into my room to say "hi." Sometimes they talk about silly things like weekend plans or their prom dresses. Other times the conversations are about family, money, or school problems. It's rewarding to know I've connected with the students and that they feel comfortable coming to me on their free time.

KENDRA GLASER, *art teacher, Mt. Vernon, Indiana*

Each morning we start off our day gathered as a whole school in our gymnasium. We call it "Good Morning Eisenhower," and it's organized by student council representatives from each grade. We sing songs together, broadcast birthdays, and celebrate the arts, learning, and our students' achievements. Many parents join us so they can start their work day off on the right foot.

KRISTY FORD, *second grade teacher, Norman, Oklahoma*

Minutes after the end of eighth period, as soon as the sounds of clanging lockers and teenage chatter subside, I return to my desk, take a few deep breaths, and reflect on a day of teaching. Now and again, I jot down notes of what went well, and what should be tweaked. Just about that time, a head will pop through the doorway, and there's one of my students wanting to talk about a book we're reading. These moments really bring my day full circle.

MELISSA GENTILE, *English teacher, Dover, New Jersey*

What is the best part of your school day?

The best part of my day is watching the lightbulb go on when students "get it" for the first time. Like the time Sean, a student of mine who was nearly failing, went on to win the school-wide Spanish poetry recitation contest. Those pride-filled moments, when I see students' self-esteem rise as they achieve academic success for the first time, are always the best.

SCOTT DUNN, *Spanish teacher, Simsbury, Connecticut, pictured with his student, Sean (seated).*

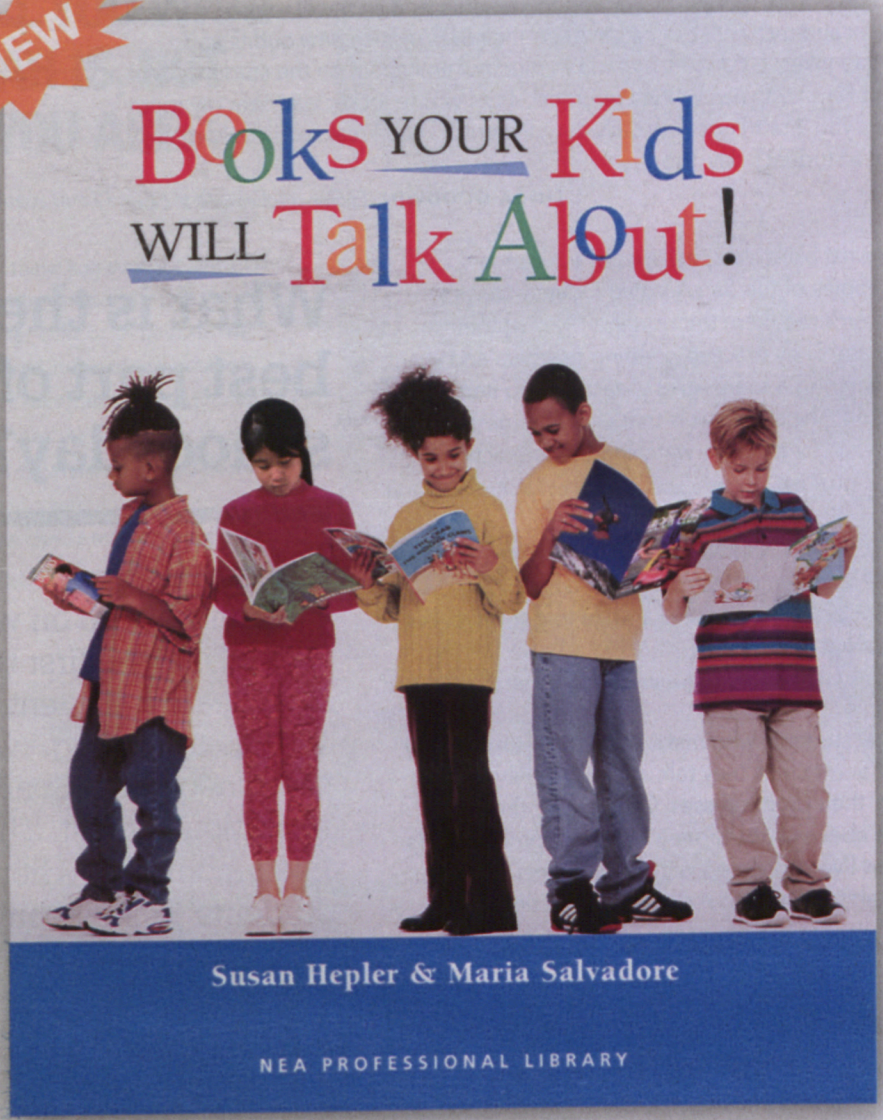
We want to hear from you!

WHEN WINTER BREAK IS OVER, HOW DO YOU BEAT THE POST-HOLIDAY BLAHS? PLEASE USE SPECIFIC EXAMPLES AND ANECDOTES, AND WE'LL CONSIDER YOUR SUBMISSION FOR AN UPCOMING ISSUE OF *NEA TODAY*. VISIT WWW.NEA.ORG/FORUMS OR E-MAIL CINDY LONG AT CLONG@NEA.ORG

PHOTO: JONATHAN OLSON

A Guide to Children's Literature for Teachers and Parents (K-6)

NEW



Read any good books lately? It's fun to talk about our favorite books and literary conquests. Kids enjoy talking about their favorite books, too, and encouraging children to talk about what they've read is a powerful learning tool. So how can you connect kids with books that will inspire and motivate them? *Books Your Kids Will Talk About!* helps educators and parents navigate the ever-expanding universe of children's literature. This comprehensive, multicultural, annotated booklist is organized around themes that are important in a child's world. Teachers will find suggestions on how to integrate these books into the curriculum. Parents can use the books as a suggested reading list to foster lively discussion and self-exploration among young readers. Whether at home or in the classroom, it's easy to stir up a buzz about *Books!*

nea NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
Great Public Schools for Every Child

To order, contact the NEA Professional Library at (800) 229-4200, or order online at www.nea.org/books.

Shipping charges will be added to each order.

When **Change** Makes **Sense**

There's a better way to help assess and engage students. Want to be able to try it?

FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, assessing where they're at academically and engaging them happens with approaches called Response to Intervention (RTI) and Universal Design for Learning (UDL), which are both mentioned in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. But if NEA and other groups lobbying now for effective changes to NCLB are successful, those methods will be available for all children who need extra help.

"These two concepts make good sense for helping kids who are struggling," says Patti Ralabate, special education expert for the Association.

That means that students who need extra help, like those for whom English is a second language, would reap the benefits of RTI—a tiered system that starts with an assessment of students' abilities and results in a team of teachers and paraeducators giving the students specialized support. Under the UDL approach, educators get the resources they need to present information in multiple ways, including electronic textbooks that can be adapted to students' needs. Students could get text for class in their native language, in larger print, or with embedded vocabulary definitions.

As part of NEA's Positive Agenda for NCLB (at press time, the law was up for reauthorization in Congress) these strategies would become part of the revised law and be available for all districts nationwide. Virginia is now implementing a statewide RTI pilot project; Colorado has had one in place for years. Illinois recently passed new regulations ensuring that RTI is rolled out efficiently, and doesn't become a burden on educators. And that's a crucial part of NEA's lobbying effort—making sure RTI and UDL programs are fully funded and effectively implemented, so that educators are not suddenly burdened with extra data collection. In December, the Association will sponsor one educator from every state to attend an invitational on Response to Intervention in Washington, D.C. And, NEA is currently crafting on-line resources about RTI and UDL."We are already on this," says Ralabate of the Association's preparations. "We are not going to be surprised."

Deputized Teachers **15**

Feet in Mouths **16**

Environmental Literacy **18**

PHOTO AT TOP: REALISTIC REFLECTIONS

Bursting the Bubble

Teachers protesting that NCLB pressures them to ignore students who will definitely pass the test and those certain to flunk, now have science backing them up.

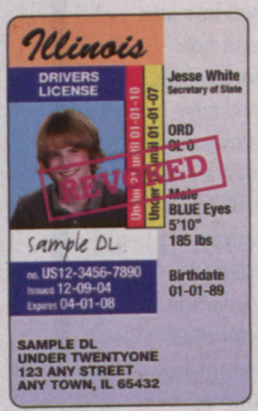
UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO scientists Derek Neal and Diane Schanzenbach tracked the scores of Chicago students after new rules were put in place requiring students to achieve minimum scores on a state test. They found that students in the middle made the most progress, while those at the top and bottom made little or none. Their conclusion: Schools focused their efforts on students for whom more instruction might make the difference between passing and failing—the "bubble kids."

There's a good chance this particular NCLB insanity will be cured. The law's defenders and critics alike favor changes that would allow states to use "growth models," in which schools are rated according to how much scores go up, regardless of whether their students make it past the "proficiency" mark.

NEA supports growth models along with a raft of other changes to turn NCLB into a law that helps teachers help children learn better. NEA's Positive Agenda for the NCLB reauthorization can be found at www.nea.org/ref?agenda.

No Attendance, No Wheels

Students cutting class to head to the mall may want to consider how they're going to get there now that states are linking attendance to driving privileges. The latest, Illinois, enacted a law that puts the brakes on any student who has more than 18 unexcused absences or has been expelled. Students under 18 who drop out also are automatically ineligible for a drivers license or provisional permit. (There are exceptions for medical and economic reasons, or if a student has or is getting an equivalency diploma.) At least 17 other states have laws limiting driving for students with shoddy school attendance records. In Iowa, for example, dropouts' licenses are suspended until they re-enroll.

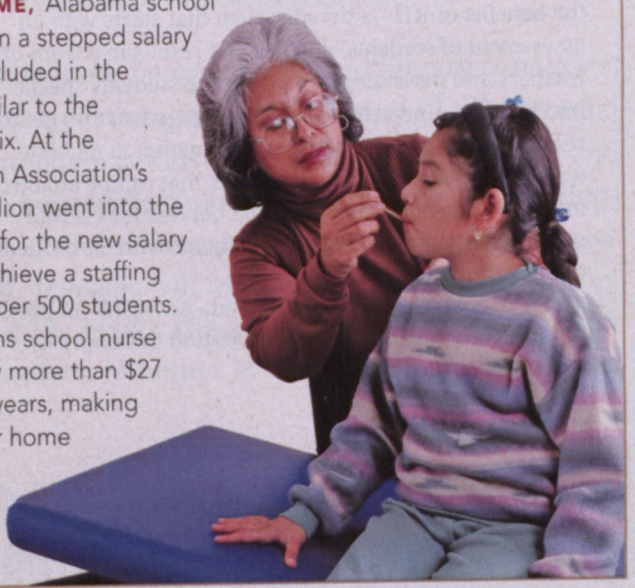


Reducing the numbers of dropouts is crucial in Illinois, where 24,000 students left the schools early last year. Nationwide, more than 2,000 students walk away from school every day.

An Ounce of Prevention on Payroll

FOR THE FIRST TIME, Alabama school nurses this year won a stepped salary schedule that is included in the state's budget, similar to the teacher salary matrix. At the Alabama Education Association's insistence, $7.1 million went into the budget to provide for the new salary schedule and to achieve a staffing ratio of one nurse per 500 students. That increase means school nurse funding jumped by more than $27 million in just two years, making Alabama a sweeter home indeed for them.

—AMY HUBBARD MARLOWE



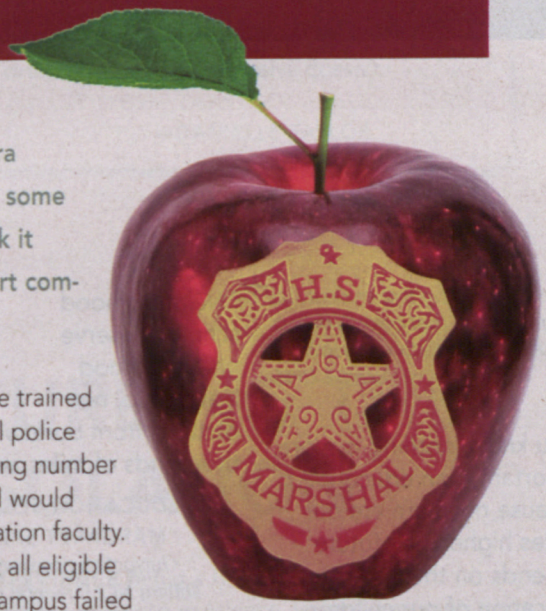
BUBBLE PHOTOS: ANBK; TEEN ON DRIVERS LICENSE: TRACY WHITESIDE; SCHOOL NURSE: DAVID BUFFINGTON

$0.60

Most that could be SAVED per child, per year, despite voucher proponents' claims that taxpayers would save $444 billion dollars if students could attend PRIVATE SCHOOLS of their choice. (Trust us, those 60 cents don't add up to that.)

SOURCE: ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY EDUCATION POLICY RESEARCH UNIT

Campus Cops



Teachers come to school every day armed with knowledge, patience, extra Kleenex...we could go on and on. But some Nevada law enforcement officials think it would be a good idea for them to start coming armed with, well, arms.

THEIR PROPOSAL: Let teachers become trained and equipped to serve as reserve school police officers, in an effort to boost the dwindling number of full-time campus police. The proposal would apply to K-12 teachers and higher education faculty. (A move by one Nevada lawmaker to let all eligible teachers bring concealed weapons on campus failed earlier this year.)

If they wanted to wear this particular badge, teachers would first have to pass fitness and mental agility tests and a background check. Then they'd head off to law enforcement academy courses at their local community college. In exchange for their service and shelling out about $1,500 for equipment and uniforms, they'd get a $3,000 stipend from their school district.

Not everyone thinks the idea of pistol-packing educators is a good idea. Ken Trump, the president of National School Safety and Security Services, told *The Las Vegas Sun* that the unorthodox proposal would put an incongruous burden on teachers, even if it is voluntary. Trump's take: "Rather than off-the-wall proposals, how about our legislators focus on stopping the cuts to funding for school safety and emergency preparedness, mental health services and support programs."

+ notepad

NEW STUDY: KIDS WITH HOMEWORK NEED A HAND

Parents are pitching in when it comes to homework, according to a recent study sponsored by NEA and LeapFrog Enterprises. Sixty-six percent of parents of middle schoolers say their child asks for help with homework. More than half (57 percent) of middle school students say their parents help them for at least an hour a night on homework two-and-a-half nights each week.

TEACHING NEW HISTORY IN JENA, LOUISIANA

College students at several institutions got a first-hand look at civil rights this fall, traveling to protests organized in reponse to the arrest of six Black teenagers in Jena, Louisiana. Students at such schools as Howard Univeristy, Morgan State and the University of Texas at Austin rallied on behalf of the "Jena 6," who were charged with attempted murder for allegedly assaulting a White student.

Professors also built legal lectures and essays on the "Jena 6" into their courses, tying the current controversy to historical events.

Have a great idea?

Send it by mail: *NEA Today*
1201 16th St., N.W.,
Washington, DC 20036

Send it by e-mail:
neatoday@nea.org

APPLE: ALEX STAROSELTSEV; BADGE: VINCENT GIORDANO

44%

Number of SCHOOL DISTRICTS that have cut science, social studies, art, music, physical education, lunch, or recess time since 2001 in RESPONSE to NCLB mandates.

SOURCE: CENTER ON EDUCATION POLICY

Helpful Hand Luke

THE SIGNATURE ON THE $5,000 check in high school drama teacher Michelle Peet's mailbox caught her attention: Paul Newman. As in *that* Paul Newman. The Academy Award-winning star of *Cool Hand Luke* and *The Sting* sent a donation to her Ypsilanti, Michigan, school's fund to attend the Fringe Festival in Scotland. "The enclosed contribution is sent with every good wish for continued success in your worthy endeavors," he wrote. Newman learned about the trip when he and other potentially simpatico celebs were included on the drama club's fundraising campaign list.

They Said What?!

Some pundits and politicians can't seem to open their mouths without sticking their foot inside or voicing staggering hypocrisy when it comes to public education. Take a look back at the worst of the worst:

"Al-Qaeda, they could bring in a nuke into this country and kill 100,000 people with a well-placed nuke somewhere. Okay. We would recover from that. It would be a terrible tragedy, but the teachers unions in this country can destroy a generation."

—NEAL BOORTZ
Feb. 19, 2007, Fox News "Hannity & Colmes"

"It is a practical thing; it's something you can do. It might be a way to deflect those bullets until police go there."

—BILL CROZIER
Failed candidate for Oklahoma state superintendent of education, recommending that students be given thick textbooks to deflect bullets during school shootings, October 2006.

"You know, nothing is more important than education, because nowhere are our stakes higher; our future depends on the quality of education of our children today."

—CALIFORNIA GOV. ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER
Feb. 15, 2005, before launching an attack on public school funding, teachers' professional rights, and unions.

"Neighborhood schools deserve neighborhood leadership, not dictates from bureaucrats thousands of miles away."

—EDUCATION SECRETARY MARGARET SPELLINGS
Outspoken proponent of the stifling NCLB federal mandate, The Washington Post, June 9, 2007

"If most parents understood the depth of the homosexual agenda in the schools, there would be a revolution."

—ROBERT H. KNIGHT
Director of the Culture and Family Institute, May 6, 2002

"Pilot voucher programs for the urban poor will lead the way to statewide universal voucher plans. Soon, most government schools will be converted into private schools or simply close their doors."

—JOSEPH BAST
President of the pro-voucher Heartland Institute, Feb. 1, 2002

"Public education has never been a sound idea."

—R. CORT KIRKWOOD
syndicated columnist and managing editor of The Daily News-Record *in Harrisonburg, Virginia, Oct. 4, 2002.*

CHECK ILLUSTRATION: IMAGEZOO/IMAGES.COM

A Stroke of Beauty

FOR MOST PEOPLE, elementary school penmanship lessons meant painstakingly copying curly, swooping letters, but the work eventually paid off in beautiful script. Third grade would hardly seem the same without them. In today's digital world though, e-mail, online banking, and word processors have virtually erased the need for such handiwork, and students work at too fast a pace to even bother with tedious cursive.

To adapt, educators have found ways to make learning cursive quicker and cleaner, turning to programs such as Handwriting Without Tears to develop their students' penmanship. Cursive has become vertical, not slanted, with little of the fuss associated with fancy uppercase characters. Even the paper is changing. Practice paper has two lines, not three, to guide each letter.

Students are finding the method easier to use, and proponents in school systems in at least 15 states say their handwriting has improved dramatically. Finally, cursive doesn't have to be a curse.

—DANIELLE TAYLOR

CURBING THE ISOLATION

IT CAN BE A LONELY EXPERIENCE being a Black, Hispanic, or American Indian college student majoring in science, technology, engineering, or math. But a new partnership between four historically Black colleges and four majority White ones seeks to change that. In the VA-NC Alliance for Minority Participation, students can participate in exchange programs between the universities and receive more personalized instruction.

Funded with a $5 million grant from the National Science Foundation, the partnership projects that by 2012 it will graduate 1,050 minority technology students from the schools—Bennett College for Women, Elizabeth City State University, Saint Augustine's College, and Johnson C. Smith University in North Carolina, and the University of Virginia—Charlottesville, George Mason University, Virginia Commonwealth University, and Virginia Tech. The schools also will conduct outreach events at high schools to woo students to the program.

> capitol report

CONGRESS PASSES HISTORIC COLLEGE AFFORDABILITY LEGISLATION

The NEA-supported College Cost Reduction and Access Act represents the single largest investment in college financial aid since the 1944 GI Bill. It increases funding for student financial aid, including the critical Pell Grant program, and cuts interest rates on subsidized student loans. The new law also provides tuition assistance for qualified undergraduates who commit to teaching in public schools in high-poverty communities or high-need subject areas.

SOCIAL SECURITY OFFSETS HEARING ON THE HORIZON

A hearing on the Government Pension Offset and Windfall Elimination Provision—two unfair offsets that cut or eliminate the Social Security benefits of many NEA members—could take place in the House Ways and Means Committee as early as this November. Sign NEA's electronic petition in support of GPO/WEP repeal at www.nea.org/ref?socsec today!

Visit NEA's Legislative Action Center at http://www.nea.org/lac for info on Congressional action affecting you.

NOTEPAD: STEPHEN AARON REES; HANDS: STARCEA GHEORGHE SILVIU

No Child Left Inside

LEGISLATORS ARE WORKING on a number of changes to improve NCLB for students, but a few of the proposed changes might help Mother Earth too. Congressman John P. Sarbanes (D-MD) wants a voluntary grant program built into the legislation (which is currently up for reauthorization in the U.S. Congress) to reward states for developing environmental education standards and infusing them into their curriculum.

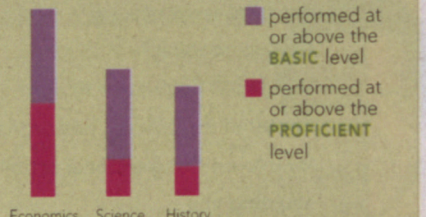
Joining him in sponsoring this bill, titled "No Child Left Inside," is Sen. Jack Reed (D-RI). Reed and Sarbanes' efforts to get students as literate in recycling as they are in reading are being fostered by a coalition that includes NEA, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, the Sierra Club, the National Wildlife Federation, and other environmental watchdogs.

Under the proposal, teachers would be eligible for environmental education training modeled on math and science teacher training partnerships. Also, to qualify for the grant money, states would have to develop and submit a K-12 plan outlining how they will ensure their high school graduates are environmentally literate.

"The next generation faces enormous national and international environmental challenges," Sarbanes says. "Sound environmental education will make for healthier lifestyles and provide a foundation for the next generation to tackle these challenges head-on."

VITAL STATS

It seems that the nation's 12th-graders know more than might be expected about economics. **HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS** did better on the inaugural National Assessment of Educational Progress economics exam than those taking the history and science exams. Roughly 11,500 students from 590 schools took the exams. Economics class experience did not necessarily yield a higher score, according to researchers.


performed at or above the BASIC level
performed at or above the PROFICIENT level
Economics Test
Science Test
History Test

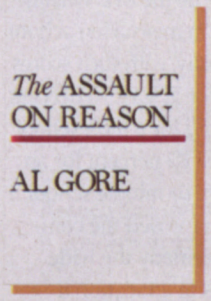
SOURCE: NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS

"Everywhere I go in the under-developed
a 'teacher' or 'doctor'—the two most re
(the developed) world, where we have
third-class citizens and pay them like

CHILD IN TREE: RANA FAURE

Book Focus

THE ASSAULT ON REASON, AL GORE



No doubt about it, Al Gore is jittery—and not just about climate change. American democracy is on life support, according to *The Assault on Reason,* Gore's fervent and compelling look at our debased public discourse. A disinterested and misinformed public, a lax news media, the triumph of fear over reason, and a White House exploiting it all—are we doomed?

Not yet. Gore's main criticism is with television's failure to engage citizens in the democratic process. Salvation therefore can be delivered by greater connectivity—including "two-way television" via the Internet—between the public and government. Although he treats lightly the role that the Internet itself plays in the breakdown of public discourse—through disinformation and demagoguery—Gore, by elevating reasoned and informed debate, leads by example.

Q&A

Michelle Singletary

FINANCIAL ADVISOR, AUTHOR

Personal finance guru Michelle Singletary presides over the nationally syndicated *Washington Post* column "The Color of Money," NPR podcasts, the TV One program "Singletary Says," and books such as *Your Money and Your Man.*

What's one piece of advice you'd offer to teachers and support professionals trying to stretch a dollar as far as it will go?
You need to have a budget. If your budget is not balanced because your pay is low then you have to act. You may need to get a roommate or two. You may have to live with relatives. You may have to move to a cheaper location. You may have to hang onto that hoopty for a few more years.

Young people are shying away from the education profession because of fear they won't be able to repay student loan debt. Any advice?
First, don't pay for a brand-name school. Far too many students, especially those going into education, pay thousands of dollars to go to expensive public and private schools. Stay within your state if you have to go to school with loans. Go to a community college first and get the basic course requirements out of the way, then transfer to a four-year university. Live at home instead of living on campus.

You talk about the importance of couples communicating about money. How do you start when one partner has cold feet about finances?
If your partner is reluctant to talk about finances and you haven't yet said "I do," say "I don't," and head for the door. If during the courtship, you are having financial fights or you can't communicate about your money differences without an argument, kick him or her to the curb. As an educator you know that your salary won't be in the stratosphere. You will have to budget and watch spending. Why would you hook up with someone challenged in that department and unwilling to do anything about it?

world, when I ask people what they want to be, they say
pected professions. I really regret that in
the money and the ability, we treat teachers like
ifth-class citizens."

—CNN REPORTER CHRISTIANE AMANPOUR, IN *EDUTOPIA*

leading the way

CHANGING THE COURSE OF NCLB

BY TIM WALKER

Take your time, just get it right. That was the message delivered in person by NEA President Reg Weaver to the House Committee on Education and Labor on September 10. Weaver was on Capitol Hill to testify on the proposed changes to Title I of the No Child Left Behind law, the current version of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, outlined in a 435-page draft bill submitted two weeks earlier by Chairman George Miller (D-CA) and ranking member Howard "Buck" McKeon (R-CA).

While praising the inclusion of several NEA priorities, including multiple measures for evaluating school quality and student learning and growth models, NEA officials concluded that the changes fell short of meeting the goals necessary to truly reform the law.

In his testimony to the committee, Weaver, speaking on behalf of NEA's 3.2 million members, urged committee members to seize the opportunity to address the numerous philosophical and structural flaws that underpin NCLB. Merely tinkering with the law is not enough. What is needed, Weaver said, is a "major course correction."

"The bottom line is this: While we applaud the committee for identifying most of the problematic provisions of current law, we do not believe the committee's first discussion draft of Title I adequately remedies them," said Weaver.

NEA has long championed using multiple sources of evidence to establish a more accurate accounting of student performance. Although the committee's draft bill accepts this idea in principle, the list of measures in the bill is too restrictive. The statewide reading and math test scores would still be the overwhelming factor in measuring school accountability, with such scores counting for at least 75 percent of the rating for a high school and at least 85 percent for an elementary or middle school.

Weaver urged the committee to remedy the wide disparities in educational opportunities and resources. Congress should tailor a bill that delivers tangible results across the board to children of all backgrounds, including provisions for early childhood education, safer schools, smaller class sizes, and school modernization.

Such comprehensive legislation, Weaver said, would send a loud, clear message to educators across the country that students are more than test scores, and "the art and practice of teaching is and must be about more than test preparation."

Because NEA members have lived under the flaws of NCLB for five years, they are counting on a thoughtful, substantive reauthorization process.

"Our members are united," Weaver told the committee, "and will stand firm in our advocacy for a bill that supports good teaching and learning and takes far greater steps toward creating great public schools for every child."

NEA President **Reg Weaver** testifies in front of members of Congress about proposed changes to NCLB. He was part of a panel of education leaders.

PHOTOS: SANDY SCHAEFFER

LIVING WAGE

States Pave Paths Toward Fair Pay

By January 30, 2008, the Maine Department of Labor will be required to calculate and report livable wages to the state's Legislature, following the enactment of a bill that statutorily defines a livable wage. The **Maine Education Association (MEA)** supports the law, but is concerned that averages are based on a family configuration of two wage-earning parents with two children. "Our preference would have been to base the primary definition on a single adult household with one child," says Joe Stupak, MEA director of Collective Bargaining and Research. The law requires estimates for the state's counties and metropolitan statistical areas broken down by five different family sizes, as well as statewide averages.

Meanwhile, education support professional (ESP) members of the **Wisconsin Education Association Council** in Wausau are campaigning for a living wage, which is roughly $16 per hour in their area, while the **Delaware State Education Association's (DSEA)** top legislative priority this year is raising the starting salary of paraeducators to $20,650, the state's poverty level for a family of four. DSEA also seeks to eliminate some pay steps from the para salary schedule.

SALARIES

Pay Hikes Help Recruit, Retain Teachers

Two Colorado locals became the first in the state to attain $40,000 starting salaries for teachers. Under **Westminster Education Association's** new agreement, veteran teachers with master's degrees plus additional college credit hours can earn up to $80,250, and ESPs received a raise of 70 cents per hour plus steps on their salary schedule. The **Aspen Education Association** boosted the base salary for teachers from $33,000 to $40,000 (those hired in at $40K remain at step 1 for seven years). Top salaries in Aspen also exceed $80,000. The two victories prompted the slogan, "Forty-K Starting Pay, Eighty-K Before I'm Gray."

Other states can boast progress in raising starting salaries. **Pennsylvania's Homer-Center Education Association (HCEA)** may rank 496th in local wealth out of 501 districts, but it can claim one of the most progressive teacher contracts in the state, with a starting salary of $42,566 this school year and $52,012 in 2009–10. "To attract the best teachers, salary is an issue," says HCEA President Jane Mastro. "When student success is the goal of a district, then choosing the best candidate for a teaching position is imperative."

LEGISLATIVE VICTORIES

ESPs Gain Flexibility While Teacher Benefits Expand

Through grass-roots organizing, the **Illinois Education Association** helped drive passage of the state's Reduction in Force Bill, which improves "recall to work rights" for education support professionals (ESPs) and expands the definition of "reduction in force" to include reduction in hours. This gives the union the ability to bargain over the decision to reduce a worker's hours, which in some cases means workers are protected from falling under a 40-hour week and losing benefits. The bill also allows ESPs who are laid off to be recalled to vacant positions in any job classification for which they are qualified. Previously, workers could only be recalled to their former position.

In Wyoming, school districts have become more competitive with neighboring states, thanks to lobbying efforts by the **Wyoming Education Association (WEA).** Teacher salaries increased after lawmakers took heed from WEA and others to boost school funding. The base salary in the Natrona County School District, for example, is $41,240 this school year, up from last year's salary of $40,800. (During the 2004–05 school year, the starting salary was $28,114).

Report Card

We check out who's making the grade—or needs improvement—in education around the country.

F **D.C. Public Schools**

The school system accepted federal funds for educating migrant children when it did not have any, receiving $3.85 million between 1994 and 2004 intended to support the education of children of seasonal employees in agriculture and fishing.

A **New Jersey Gov. Jon Corzine**

He signed a bill guaranteeing post-retirement health benefits for public workers through a PPO with an extensive network of doctors. New Jersey Education Association officials will sit on its governing board.

F **Bill Sizemore**

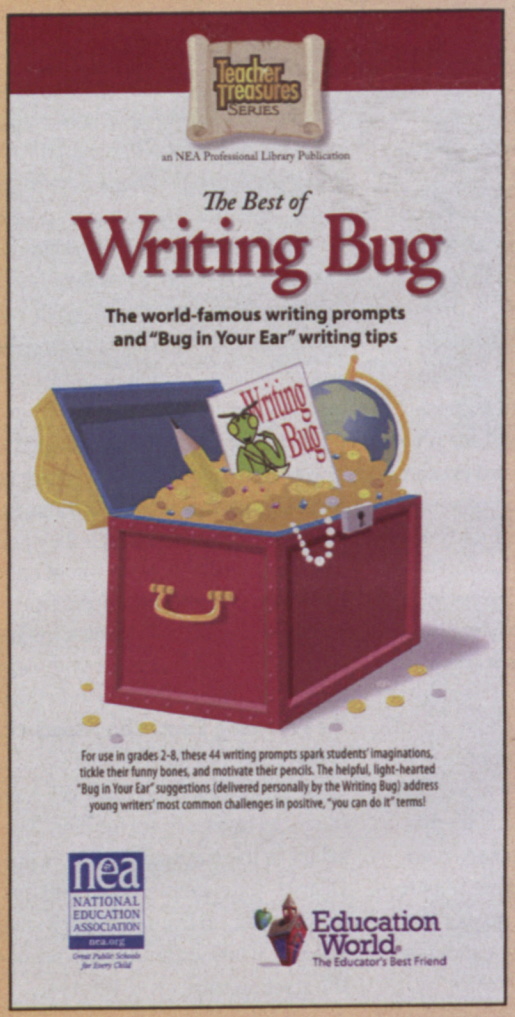
The political activist turned in 130,215 signatures to the Oregon Secretary of State for Ballot Initiative Petition 20, which would base teacher pay raises and job security on "classroom performance," and eliminate the use of seniority in deciding compensation.

DC SCHOOLS: WEB SITE; CORZINE: NJ GOV. WEB SITE; SIZEMORE: OFFICIAL WEB SITE

Teacher's Treasures Series

NEW!

The Best of Writing Bug


Teacher Treasures SERIES
an NEA Professional Library Publication
The Best of
Writing Bug
The world-famous writing prompts and "Bug in Your Ear" writing tips
Writing Bug
For use in grades 2-8, these 44 writing prompts spark students' imaginations, tickle their funny bones, and motivate their pencils. The helpful, light-hearted "Bug in Your Ear" suggestions (delivered personally by the Writing Bug) address young writers' most common challenges in positive, "you can do it" terms!
nea
NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
nea.org
Great Public Schools for Every Child
Education World
The Educator's Best Friend

The Best of Writing Bug will motivate your class to put pen to paper. These 44 writing cues will spark your students' imaginations, tickle their funny bones, and help them learn to communicate more effectively.

Co-published with Education World, Inc.

Members SAVE Over 25%

Non-Member Price: $9.95 + s&h
Member Price: $7.95 + s&h
Item# **0695X00-NT1107**

JUST CALL

800-229-4200

And Ask About All of Our Professional Development Publications

NEA Professional Library/Bookstore

nea
NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
nea.org
Great Public Schools for Every Child

VISA MasterCard

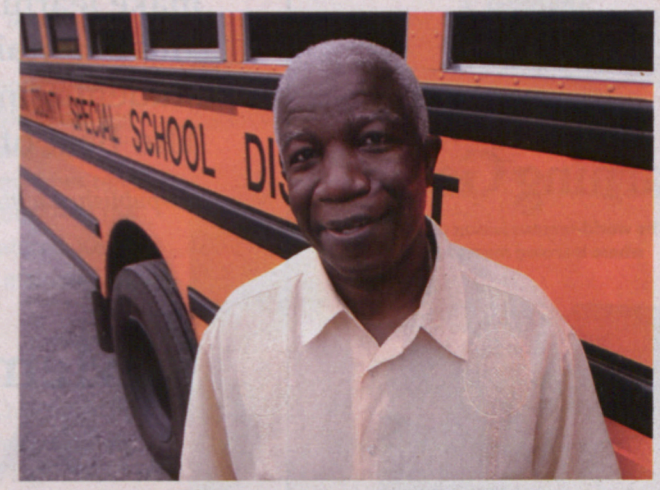
A MAGNIFICENT COMEBACK

How one Arkansas local fought injustice, lost its bargaining power, then won it back. BY JOHN ROSALES

The Pulaski County Special School District surrounds North Little Rock and Little Rock School Districts like a doughnut. With 39 school campuses spread over 750 square miles of scenic Arkansas countryside, it can take school bus drivers an hour to reach their first passenger.

Until recently, Pulaski County drivers were not paid for the time they spent driving from the bus compound to the first pick-up point. They were not compensated for conducting pre-trip safety checks or for their drive back to the compound after the last drop-off. Their pay was tied not to hours worked, but to the number of miles driven with at least one student on board, usually about 115 miles.

"Our bus drivers were on the job for an hour or so before they started getting paid," says Emry Chesterfield, a bus driver for 31 years and president of the Pulaski Association of Support Staff (PASS). "After you dropped off your last student, your pay just stopped."



We lost some good drivers, but "we're rebuilding...and getting stronger," says **Emry Chesterfield** of his local's long struggle to regain bargaining rights.

> "Our bus drivers were on the job for an hour or so before they started getting paid." —Emry Chesterfield

When you multiply 325 drivers times two donated hours per day, "that's a bunch of time we were giving away," Chesterfield says.

PASS legally challenged this injustice, and when the superintendent refused to reconsider how drivers are compensated, the drivers went on strike in January 2004. The school board called an emergency meeting during the six-day strike where they stripped PASS of its bargaining rights and began discussions to outsource transportation services to Laidlaw International.

Leaders of PASS—a wall-to-wall unit with more than 400 members representing education support professionals in 60 job positions—began working with the Arkansas Education Association (AEA) and NEA to plan a comeback.

Chesterfield and other PASS members joined Sandi Roy, UniServ director, and Laura Montgomery, president of the National Council of ESPs and vice president of PASS, to devise the following strategy to get their union back:

GO TO THE COMMUNITY—Meeting with community leaders and parents to inform them about the impact ESPs have on schools was key. "Our drivers are career people," Roy says. "They drove the parents of some of the children they are driving now." PASS members also contacted labor unions, the media, and other AEA locals, who "were willing to do anything we asked," Chesterfield adds.

DO RESEARCH—When the superintendent threatened to contact Laidlaw, Association members "did a lot of research on Laidlaw and privatization," Roy says. A task force of members contacted school trustees, parents, and teachers armed with research, press clippings, and testimonials from other districts about Laidlaw's performance record. For example, Roy learned that if Laidlaw drivers miss picking up a student, they aren't required to return. "PASS drivers always return for students," she says. They pointed out that Laidlaw was a typical privateer with poor benefits and minimum job security.

Parents began contacting Roy and Montgomery to express their support.

"They had faith and trust and respect for our ESPs," Roy says. "They realized the relationship between [ESPs] and their children....The students and parents learned there is a team working here."

MAKE YOUR ARGUMENT—Staging a comeback included developing a message and driving it home to members, community organizations, the school community, and the media.

"We said over and over again that the bus is an extension of the classroom," Roy says. They also stressed the long-term relationship between career ESPs and students, parents, and teachers.

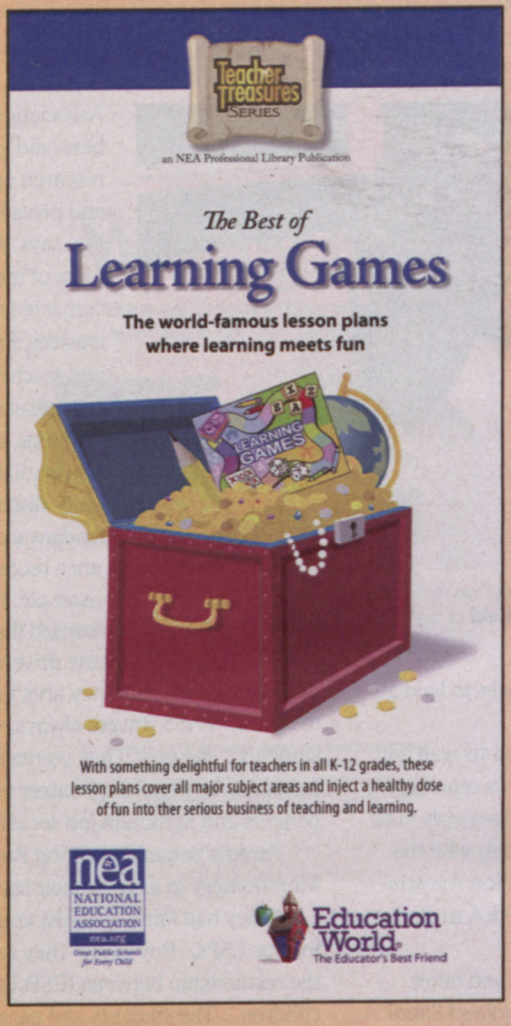
The strategy also impressed board members. Last July, they voted to return recognition and bargaining rights to PASS. At press time, negotiators were determining how best to compensate drivers for their time on the job, including the pre-trip safety inspection, and other job issues.

PHOTO: CHRIS DEAN

Teacher's Treasures Series

NEW!

The Best of Learning Games


Teacher Treasures SERIES
an NEA Professional Library Publication
The Best of
Learning Games
The world-famous lesson plans where learning meets fun
With something delightful for teachers in all K-12 grades, these lesson plans cover all major subject areas and inject a healthy dose of fun into ther serious business of teaching and learning.
nea NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION nea.org Great Public Schools for Every Child
Education World The Educator's Best Friend

World-class lesson plans that make learning fun. Challenge and entertain your K-12 students simultaneously with The Best of Learning Games.

Co-published with Education World, Inc.

Members SAVE Over 25%

Non-Member Price: $9.95 + s&h
Member Price: $7.95 + s&h
Item# **0696800-NT1107**

JUST CALL

800-229-4200

And Ask About All of Our Professional Development Publications

NEA Professional Library/Bookstore

nea NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION nea.org
Great Public Schools for Every Child

VISA MasterCard

'Dear Francesca'

JONATHAN KOZOL WRITES TO A YOUNG FIRST-GRADE TEACHER ABOUT 'LADY MARMALADE' AND NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND.

Jonathan Kozol's new book, *Letters to a Young Teacher*, qualifies for one of his favorite adjectives: "incandescent." It's based on letters he wrote after watching a young first-year Boston teacher in action and ranges from daily life in elementary school—"the small...world of colored crayons, chalk erasers, pencil sharpeners, and tiny quarrels, sometimes tears and sometimes uncontrollably contagious jubilation"—to the devastating impact of high-stakes tests. Also featured: Kozol's own harrowing days as a beginning teacher, his memories of Mr. Rogers, and a recipe for green slime.

Jonathan Kozol

When I visited your class the first time, there was a child who gave you so much trouble that you had to put him at a table in the corner where he could not constantly distract the other children. I knew that you felt bad about this. You said, "I kind of love him for his style, his defiance, but he has no common sense and absolutely no politeness."

One of the other kids told me, "He is mean!..."

The next time I was there, you had moved him to a desk beside the blackboard where you had a better chance to keep an eye on him and where you could try to bring him in from time to time to join some of the class activities....

In academic terms, the first sign of a breakthrough I would sense was when he started filling up his spiral pad with bits of narrative that opened up some of those angry memories and fears he'd been reluctant to reveal to you before....

The letter that he gave you a few days ago will, I bet, soon earn a place up on your wall. "Dear Lady Marmalade," he wrote—he had asked you what you liked for breakfast and you said that you loved orange marmalade and butter on your toast—"I think you wunder full, plus also cheesy, plus also good and wunder full. Love, Captin Black." I liked especially what he squeezed in down at the bottom of the page: "P.S. And you beter tell me Thank You for this leter be kuz I worrkt hard on it!"

****

I hate to have to switch gears...to the miseries of high-stakes testing...but you have told me several times how much this troubles teachers at your school....

In most suburban schools, where students tend to do well on...standardized exams, principals and teachers do not feel the pressure to distort curriculum and resort to other drastic measures to protect their schools from federal sanctions....

It's a different story in too many inner-city schools....

At P.S. 65,...fifth-grade teachers had to set aside all other lessons for two hours of the day to drill the children for their tests for three months prior to exams....On top of this, two afternoons a week, children had to stay from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. for yet another session of test-drilling, and on Saturdays they had to come to school again for three additional hours of the same routine during the final four weeks just before exams.

Nobody believed test-drilling was of educative worth. Its only function was to...defend the school from state or federal punishments.

In Atlanta, schools have been intentionally constructed with no playgrounds, so that no time can be wasted on activities that will not raise [test] scores. Chicago has largely abolished recess too; the only exceptions that I know are some high-scoring schools, mostly in affluent communities.

In other districts, standardized exams are now administered to children in their kindergarten year, sometimes beginning in the first weeks of the fall, in order, as the principals say, "to get them ready" for the tests that lie ahead....Many kindergarten children haven't yet learned how to hold a crayon or a pencil. They look at these tests in terror. They start to cry. They pee in their pants. The teacher's not allowed to help them other than by offering some faint encouragement: "Keep going. The whole page. All by yourself." nea

> "I think you wunder full, plus also cheesy, plus also good and wunder full. Love, Captin Black." —elementary student

PHOTO: CHESTER SIMPSON

A Tale of Three Sisters

Will they drop out or graduate? The academic journey of the Pele girls is the first story in our series on dropout prevention.

BY SABRINA HOLCOMB AND JOHN ROSALES

Honolulu's President William McKinley High School has a tradition so sacred, even teenagers dare not tread on it: Stay off the oval.

Even the redbirds and sparrows perched high on the 100-year-old banyan and palm trees seem to circumvent the ellipse surrounding the eight-ton bronze statue of the school's namesake.

"You're only allowed to walk on the oval as a graduating senior on Commencement Day," explains Tu'uali'i Pele, flanked by her two younger sisters, both McKinley students.

The younger siblings fall quiet and look away. Eighteen-year-old Tu'uali'i, nicknamed Stuki—so smart she skipped sixth grade in her birthplace of American Samoa, who can quote obscure Bible passages at will, and who co-founded a thriving school club celebrating Polynesian culture—will never walk the oval.

McKinley High offers a nurturing atmosphere—but it wasn't enough to keep **Stuki** (center) in school. She now offers support for younger sisters **Miriama** and **Beatriz** (left and right).

Stuki dropped out of school in her senior year.

"I started hanging around with the wrong people and trying to please my friends," Stuki explains. "They would call me a loser and a geek for going to class."

Peer pressure, along with language barriers, economic hardship, and culture shock profoundly impede the performance of many Asian American and Pacific Islander (API) students. Though the dropout rate in Hawaii is by most accounts almost 16 percent, the scant data monitoring Pacific Islanders indicate their dropout rate is higher.

The numbers are hard to pin down because more than 50 ethnic groups (representing about 100 languages) are categorized under the umbrella term API. Even Hawaii, with the highest percentage of API students in the country, isn't required to separate the subgroups on its No Child Left Behind state report card.

McKinley's diverse API population has a proud legacy of high-achieving graduates who attend Ivy League schools, military academies, and mainland universities from California to Maine. Yet the picturesque school, whose students and teachers seem to embody the aloha spirit of Hawaii, also has one of the highest dropout rates and ninth-grade retention rates in the state, with nearly a third of the freshman class repeating their first year of high school.

But Vice Principal John Hammond is not deterred. "The kids have a lot more potential than they think," he says. He has seen a direct correlation between students' involvement in extracurriculars and academic performance. "The more involved in school they become, the better they start to do."

The Polynesian Club

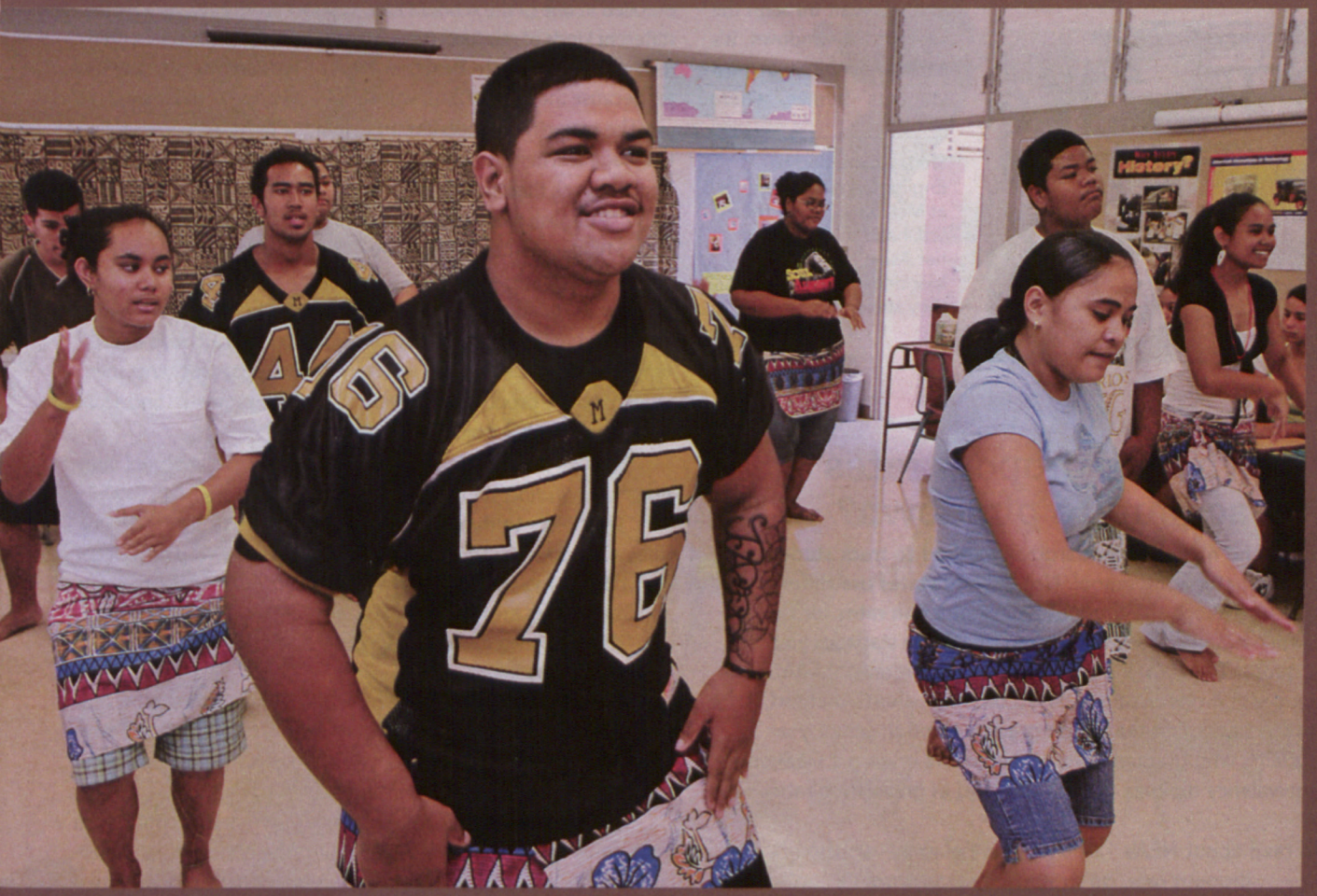
At the beginning of her senior year, Stuki was concerned that some API students were skipping school and partying too much. Determined to do something about it, she dedicated herself to founding (with her best friend Hiramo) the Polynesian Club.

"I wanted [Pacific Islanders] to take pride in their culture," she says. But at first, it was hard to get students to attend.

Discouraged, and floundering academically themselves, Stuki and Hiramo started skipping class. They eventually dropped out, just a few months before school ended.

By that time, however, the Polynesian Club was increasing in popularity. It has since become a lifeline for Pacific Islander students, including Stuki's sisters, Miriama, almost 17 and currently enrolled in a "last chance" seniors program, and Beatriz, a 14-year-old freshman who stumbled at McKinley after a stellar record in middle school.

Top: Despite a beautiful campus and a dedicated staff, McKinley High, like many urban schools, faces a dropout problem. Inset: Stuki visits her sisters at school. Below: Miriama (far left) and fellow members of the Polynesian Club don *ie lavalava* (Samoan sarongs) while performing a traditional dance. Celebrating their culture does wonders for the teens' self-esteem, say their teachers.



PHOTOS: PHILIP SPALDING III

"If we can keep them through ninth grade, we can usually hold on to them." —**Patricia Meyer, transition coordinator**

"I was, like, nervous and shy when I first got to school," says Miriama, who has bright eyes and a ready smile. "When I found out there were Samoan kids [at school], I started to know what to do and where to go."

Representing a dozen ethnicities, the club's 60 members meet once a week. Through song, dance, and storytelling, students from Samoa, Tonga, Hawaii, and other Pacific Islands discuss each other's history, language, and cuisine. They've been known to debate, for example, how best to prepare *kalua* pork, which is slow-roasted in an underground oven and shredded.

"When you come here," says senior Darlene Samau, "you don't feel like a lost Polynesian child."

Before the club, some Pacific Islander students felt like they didn't have an identity on campus, explain staff advisors Akenese Nikolao-Mutini and Clarisse Tuasivi, who are both Polynesian.

"If they don't have strength in the academic areas, they feel shunned," says Nikolao-Mutini. "They feel they're fighting against a stereotype as soon as they walk into a classroom," adds Tuasivi.

Many students stay late to do their homework in the club's classroom, where the floral-scented breezes from nearby orchid gardens waft through the six-foot-tall windows. It's a marked contrast to most students' homes, where there can be two and three generations of family under one roof. Often, teens must help with child rearing, which takes time away from working on assignments.

Shirley Lum teaches English language learners at McKinley. She knows first-hand the struggles her Asian and Pacific Islander students face as they strive to graduate.

"The Polynesian Club is helping us do better in school," says Miriama, who along with other members must complete one career and two community projects a year. Last year, members conducted a groundbreaking student survey inquiring about, among other items, whether they plan to finish high school and continue their education. Responses to why they might quit school ranged from "English is hard to understand," to "teachers are racist," to "hate doing homework," and "school is not a priority at my home." Most students indicated either that they plan to continue their education or "have not thought about it."

Safety Nets

Part of a McKinley educator's role is to get students thinking about their futures, says Laverne Moore, the school's curriculum coordinator. "The students who make it have a caring adult following them through their school years to graduation."

Many members of the Polynesian Club, including Miriama, are enrolled in one of the school's nine support programs, which offer different kinds of reinforcement to help students attain the 22 credits needed to graduate. Beatriz will have a harder time than her sister because the class of 2010 will need 24 credits to graduate.

The majority of students enrolled in the programs are English language learners (ELLs). Like most ELL students, Miriama and Beatriz speak their native tongue at home and with friends. They only use English when talking with teachers, they say, or writing on their MySpace pages (where they proudly label themselves "100% certified Samoan").

When students do speak English, it's often a mixture of English and their native language, says Patricia Meyer, transition coordinator and Polynesian Club advisor. Meyer helps place incoming students at the proper grade level and outgoing students find a job, a vocation or other training.

She says when students hear Standard English in school, they don't always understand the teacher.

"They have to think about it and translate it into their language," says Meyer. "If there's no vocabulary for a word or concept in that language, they don't know what we're talking about."

She stresses the importance of early intervention.

"If we can keep them through ninth grade, we can usually hold on to them," she adds.

Barely three months into her freshman year, Beatriz is becoming a poster child for the ninth-grade blues. "She's like me," says Stuki, who is worried about her younger sister. "We're the kind of people who think we know everything."

When students stumble, school counselors step in, confer with teachers, and determine whether to enroll the student in an immersion program where the same group spends all day with one or two

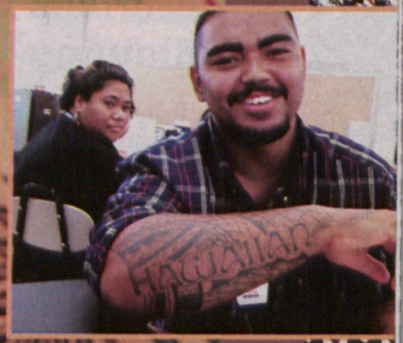
Why are dropout rates so hard to pin down?

There is no national, standardized method to track students who stop attending school. Not only do states use different measurements, the dropout and graduation rates for the same state can vary depending on whose statistics you quote. The Hawaii Department of Education's "15-16 percent" dropout rate is based on the "cohort" method, which tracks first-time ninth graders through senior year. Students who graduate after their cohort or earn a GED or equivalency diploma are not included in graduation rates.

To read about NEA's 12-point action plan for reducing the dropout rate, go to www.nea.org/dropout/.

PHOTO: SEWELL JOHNSON

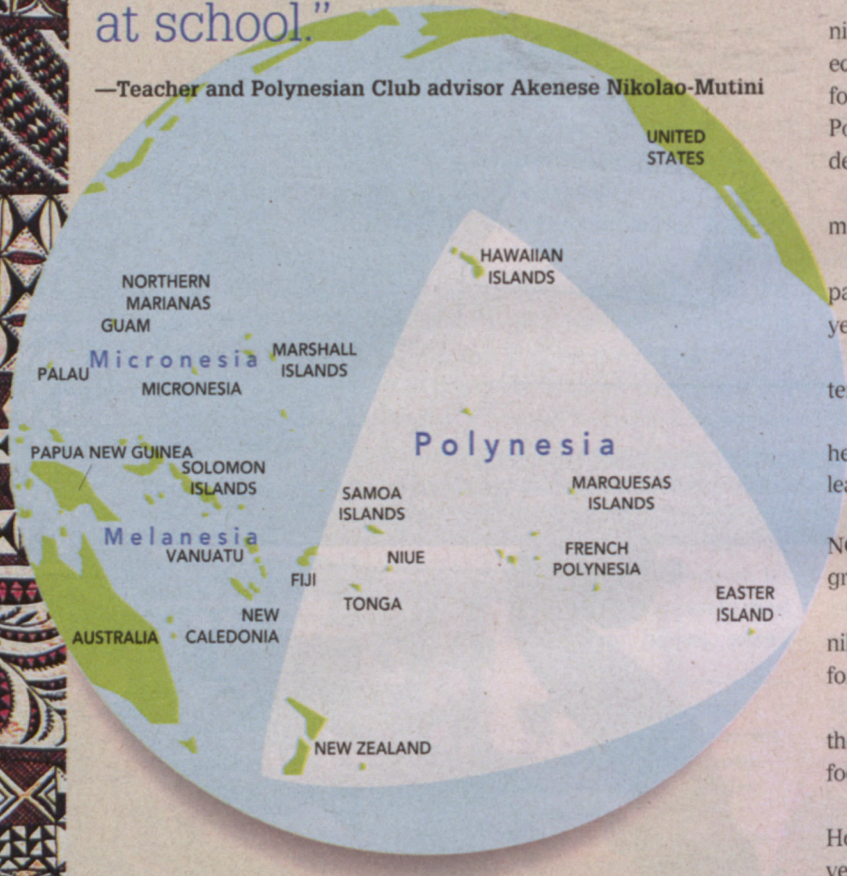
Top: Teachers **Geoffrey Au** (center) and **Clarisse Tuasivi** (right of Au), meet with officers of the 60-member Polynesian Club. Below & top inset: Students participate in **Puanani Howell's** music class. Bottom inset: A Po'okela Academy student proudly declares himself "Hawaiian."



PHOTOS: TOP, NANCY WILCOX; INSET BOTTOM, SEWELL JOHNSON; OTHER PHOTOS, PHILIP SPALDING III

Students from the Pacific Islands "struggle with cultural identity when their families move to Honolulu. They often live one life at home and another at school."

—Teacher and Polynesian Club advisor Akenese Nikolao-Mutini



"Pacific Islander" is a geographic term that describes inhabitants of the following three sub-regions:

Polynesia More than 1,000 islands grouped within a triangle covering the east-central region of the Pacific Ocean, bound by the Hawaiian islands in the north, New Zealand in the west, and Easter Island in the east.

Melanesia The independent state of Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, Fiji, Vanuatu, New Caledonia, and various smaller islands.

Micronesia This region includes the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, and the islands of Guam and Palau, among others.

teachers—like the Po'okela Academy, an intensive "last chance" program designed for seniors with fewer than 15 credits, or the Special Motivation Program (SMP). For teen parents, there's even a parenting program with an on-campus day care center where students drop off their babies before class.

When students have options, says SMP teacher Jake Hoopai, it can mean the difference between being employed or homeless.

The Power of Motivation

A half-dozen fans help cool Hoopai's room where about 20 ninth- through 12th-graders work on geography and science projects. Some have sketched in detail rare insects and exotic plants found on their island homelands in Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia (see sidebar). There are also a few first-generation students from China, Japan, and the Philippines.

They have been assigned to the SMP because they've failed more than two classes and show other signs of needing help.

"Everyone in this class has a learning disability, or wasn't prepared for high school by their middle school," says Hoopai, a 35-year veteran of McKinley who graduated from the school in 1966.

The elementary schools in Micronesia, for example, have a system of learning that stresses oral communication.

"Some students get here and don't know what a paragraph is," he says. "Their system of teaching is based on oral history. They learn by listening."

As such, when some students arrive, they are so far behind in NCLB terms, they get placed in one of McKinley's "catch-up" programs so they can graduate.

Some of Hoopai's students walk to campus from the boy's juvenile detention center located two blocks away. They were arrested for smoking marijuana, shoplifting, or other minor offenses.

Hoopai does not want his current students to share the fate of the young people he sees at the beach searching through trash for food. "Some are former students," he says. "They dropped out."

Twenty percent of SMP students return to regular classes, says Hoopai, while 75 percent go on to the Po'okela Academy. Some years, 5 percent of students might drop out, "But last year we didn't lose any," he says with relief.

In Search of Excellence

Miriama, who started her senior year this September with just 14 credits, is enrolled in Po'okela Academy.

Po'okela, which means excellence, places a group of students with one teacher for the academic year, emphasizing class cohesiveness over Western-style, individual competition. The idea is *ohana*—working together as family—and is the last hope for seniors to graduate on time.

"It's about relationship, relationship, relationship," emphasizes academy instructor Bernadette James, who says it's easy for quiet, respectful students with perfect attendance records like Miriama to slip through the cracks. The Academy allows her to spend more one-on-one time with students.

"We all help each other," says Miriama, who James says is "a delight to teach."

"School is more fun now," adds Krystal Yamamura, a senior who needs 8.5 more credits to graduate. "When I first came to high

PHOTOS: PHILIP SPALDING III

Top: Stuki and **Beatriz** check the mail at their housing project, several miles and worlds away from McKinley's picturesque campus (below). Inset: Their mother, **Mareta Pele**, doesn't regret trading village life for the faster pace and high cost of Honolulu, despite the family's struggles.

Stuki, Beatriz, and **Miriama** have big dreams for their futures. First they must graduate from high school.

school, I wasn't real serious. I was *kalohe*, a rascal, yeah? I didn't like to listen. Now I want to graduate with my class."

"I say 'academy' because I knew it would make a difference in the way everyone, including the kids, felt about it," says James.

Po'okela and James have inspired Miriama to the point where she wants to become a teacher.

"That's Miri," says Stuki, who sometimes visits McKinley to see her sisters. "She likes everything about school."

Statewide Support for Students

McKinley is just one of 270 schools, plus 27 charter schools, that are under the jurisdiction of the Hawaii State Department of Education (HSDE). Most offer a variety of programs and services focused on meeting NCLB objectives and reducing the dropout rate, according to Russell Yamauchi, an educational specialist with HSDE.

The Comprehensive Student Support System, a key part of the statewide dropout prevention effort, is designed to meet the needs of all student groups—from the gifted and talented to those confronted with an unplanned pregnancy or temporary incarceration. Student Support Team meetings, attended by school staff, parents, and relevant community members, such as a minister, are organized to help analyze a student's problems and discuss solutions to improve the student's academic performance.

"All families are focused on having their children get an education," says Yamauchi. He acknowledges that the school system is trying its best to cope with the influx of families migrating to Hawaii, especially from the Pacific Islands, and many with different levels of formal schooling.

"Some students get so behind in credits, they drop out," he says. "Some are turned off [by school or teachers] and lose their motivation."

Other obstacles involve teen students working to contribute to the family finances. Yamauchi says many families, like the Peles, are hit hard with Honolulu's high cost of living, where a family of four renting an apartment needs to earn at least $111,695—55 percent more income—to maintain a lifestyle similar to a family living in the continental United States.

No Regrets

Beyond the postcard sunsets and blue lagoons of tourist Hawaii is Mayor Wright Homes, a crowded and noisy housing project. Mareta Pele, who earns $17,000 a year as a food packer for a bakery, pays $225 to rent a three-bedroom apartment there.

Yet, she has no regrets about leaving the tranquility of her Samoan village, Amaluia (about 2,500 miles southwest of Hawaii), where her family owns a five-bedroom house facing the beach.

"I brought my kids here for the education," says Pele, who arrived in Honolulu in 2002.

Mareta, 45, finished high school in 1980 in Samoa. Her oldest daughter, Elizabeth Emanuele, 26, completed college in Samoa and now occupies one of the apartment's bedrooms with her husband. Mareta shares a room with Miriama and son Peo, 7, while Stuki and Beatriz occupy the third room.

The family computer with Internet access allows the girls to do homework and view their MySpace pages. It competes for space in the living room with a small TV, sofa, dining table, and a well-stocked refrigerator. Family photos fill every cabinet and hang side-by-side with school certificates and a religious tapestry.

As is customary in Samoa, every evening the Peles gather for prayers voiced in their first language. "I don't want them to forget how to speak Samoan," says Pele. "It's who they are."

Pele says she misses the easy pace and charm of Amaluia where "everyone knows everyone." But the schools there did not prepare her children for Honolulu schools. "No way," she adds.

Still, Pele doesn't second-guess the move. "They needed to learn English—if they go back home, they can get better jobs. Coming from school in America and going to Samoa counts for a lot."

Mareta hopes that the two youngest girls may have learned from Stuki's experience. Beatriz announces that when she graduates from college, she's going to become a nurse like her oldest sister, while Miriama plans to teach.

"Every day," Pele says, "I ask each of them, 'Have you gone to school today?' "

Though Stuki will not walk the McKinley oval, she has enrolled in an education program that leads to a high school diploma.

"I've wanted to be a lawyer since I was in fifth grade," she admits. "I just had a downfall and it changed my life. I sit here saying if, if, if—but it's too late for ifs. I'm trying to make up for it now." nea

Send comments to jrosales@nea.org.

On the Web (www.nea.org/ref?hawaii)

Online Video: In Their Own Words
What do you get when you bring students from 20+ countries who speak two dozen different languages together at an urban high school in the nation's sixth largest city? Hear them tell you in their own words.

Audio Slideshow: Honolulu's McKinley High School
View dozens of photographs shot on location.

Video production team: Joe Hammond, NEA Interactive Media, and Darrius Green, James Hristakos, and Sewell Johnson from NEA Advertising and Broadcast Services.

PHOTOS: PHILIP SPALDING III

Is Desegregation Dying?

Schools still seek to promote integration despite a setback in the Supreme Court

BY ALAIN JEHLEN

A visitor to Nina Grow's history class at Westport Traditional Middle School in Louisville, Kentucky, might be surprised to witness her Civil War lesson: A Black student stands in front of the class role-playing a White, pre-Civil War slave owner, vigorously defending slavery as essential to the economy, while a White student argues it's immoral.

Several miles closer to downtown, in Roger Thomas' room at Highland Middle School, multi-racial groups of students compare notes on what's happened in their lives over the last 10 years, discovering that some of their experiences are similar, but others are wildly different.

These students are stretching their minds to understand how the world looks to people with very different backgrounds, and learning valuable lessons for life in a diverse nation. Grow and Thomas couldn't pull it off without the diversity they see in their classes, which is the result of the school district's effort to bring children of different races together. But last June, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled 5 to 4 that Louisville's integration program is illegal, leaving teachers there wondering what their classes will look like a few years from now.

Candace Foster sees both good and bad in Louisville's desegregation plan.

PHOTO: SAM UPSHAW

Louisville has had one of the country's more successful integration programs, made possible by the fact that the city and the mostly White surrounding area are all part of the same Jefferson County district. The county's students are about 55 percent White, 35 percent Black, and 10 percent Hispanic and other minorities.

Like most integration plans these days, Louisville's was not court-ordered; the district wanted to integrate. Now Louisville and many other school systems are scrambling to come up with new ways to accomplish the same goals, namely to:

END the racial isolation of Black and other minority children.

REDUCE the number of schools with overwhelming majorities of low-income children.

HELP middle-class and affluent White children get to know children from different backgrounds.

Educators have long been among the strongest supporters of efforts to integrate schools by both race and class. Many teachers know firsthand how tough it can be to teach a class full of students who live in poverty. Although there are many poor White students and affluent members of minority groups, racially segregated schools are often overwhelmingly poor.

America's schools were resegregating even before last June's court ruling. Research by The Civil Rights Project (www.civilrightsproject.ucla.edu), an authoritative research group, found that after the 1954 *Brown* school desegregation decision, racial isolation for Black students in the schools fell until the 1980s, but has been gradually rising since then. (See graph on page 34.)

Civil Rights Project researcher Erica Frankenberg says one reason is that there are fewer White students in urban areas to integrate the schools than there used to be. Also, she says, an increasingly conservative Supreme Court has been lifting desegregation mandates, district by district.

Meanwhile, isolation of Hispanic students has risen steadily as their numbers have grown. Hispanic students have rarely been included in desegregation efforts, Frankenberg says.

To teacher Roger Thomas, the latest Supreme Court decision was very bad news. "Until housing is integrated, schools need to be

intentionally integrated or students from different backgrounds will not have the advantage of learning from each other," he says.

But Nina Grow has mixed feelings. On the one hand, when her students learn together, it helps them "get ready to go out into the world and deal with a variety of people." Still, Grow also is beginning to think the advantages of Louisville's integration program may be outweighed by the disadvantages: the long bus rides, the extra travel problems for students in after-school activities, and the barrier to parent involvement.

At Shelby Elementary School, which, like Westport, is split almost evenly between White and Black students, physical education teacher Candace Foster shares Nina Grow's mixed feelings. She says some Jefferson County schools have racial tensions, but "Shelby is like a family, and each side gets to see the other side of the picture, so I do think the kids come out on top." But Foster, like Grow, doesn't like the travel headaches for students and parents, especially low-income Black parents without cars.

In the wake of the Court decision, Louisville and many other districts are looking into using social class instead of race in their student assignment plans.

About 40 school systems already integrate students by social class, according to a report by Richard Kahlenberg of The Century Foundation. Among them are big districts like 135,000-student Wake County in North Carolina, and smaller ones like 5,800-student Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Like Jefferson County, Wake County includes a city—Raleigh—along with suburbs and rural areas. It has students of all social classes. Wake NCAE President Jennifer Lenane says the district's social class diversity is essential to making integration work: There are enough middle class kids to go around so that few schools are mostly poor.

There's also a dedicated school board, says Lenane. "They are remarkable people. They've sometimes had to take a lot of heat" defending integration, she says.

Besides income, Wake County also looks at reading ability. The target is to have no more than 40 percent of a school's students eligible for subsidized meals, and no more than 25 percent reading below grade level.

The county is divided into small geographic areas that are assigned to schools in a way that's intended to integrate the schools with the shortest possible bus rides, according to Charles Delaney, the assistant superintendent in charge of making that system work.

But the "shortest possible" bus trip can be long. The district says average rides are roughly 30 minutes each way, with some clocking in at 45 minutes or even longer.

Some of the travelers are volunteers. Wake County has an array of impressive magnet schools in low-income areas that pull suburbanites' offspring into the city—about 9 percent of all students. But, as in many other desegregation programs, the children who take long rides because of school assignments, not choice, are disproportionately low-income and Black. Delaney acknowledges

that's a problem, but says, "by and large, the community accepts that if we're going to have a real mix, you've got to do that. Otherwise, more and more low-income and high-needs students wind up in a particular school because of housing availability, and the middle-class families leave."

Wake County bus driver Chris Bridges rode the bus himself when he was in high school—an hour and a half each way. "It was my decision," he stresses. "The school I went to offered a concentration in music. I got up at 5:30 and it was worth it."

But he thinks children, particularly elementary students, should not be made to take long trips just for the sake of integration.

Cambridge, Massachusetts, is only 6.4 square miles, compared with Wake County's 850 square miles, so distance is less of a problem there. But integration has still been highly controversial. Some middle-class parents fear their children will be slowed down by poorer children with weaker educational backgrounds and less motivation to learn.

Cambridge resident Julie Craven lives integration both as a parent and a teacher. Her school, King Open, was founded with an individualized, learn-at-your-own-pace philosophy that appealed

MORE SEPARATE

The racial isolation of Black students fell after desegregation efforts took hold, but today it is rising again.

MORE TRENDS: HISPANICS AND REGION-BY-REGION AT WWW.NEA.ORG/REF?DESEGREGATION
SOURCE: CIVIL RIGHTS PROJECT.

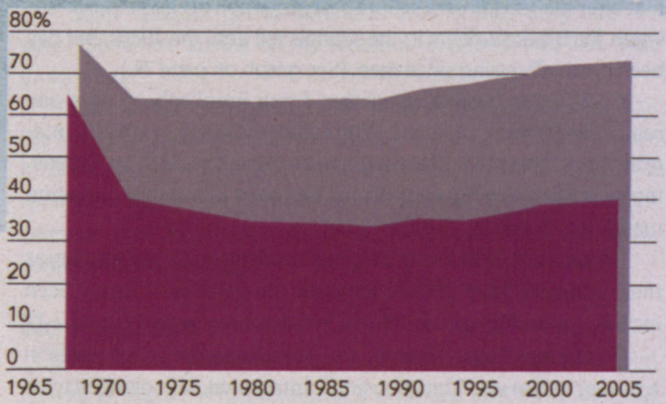
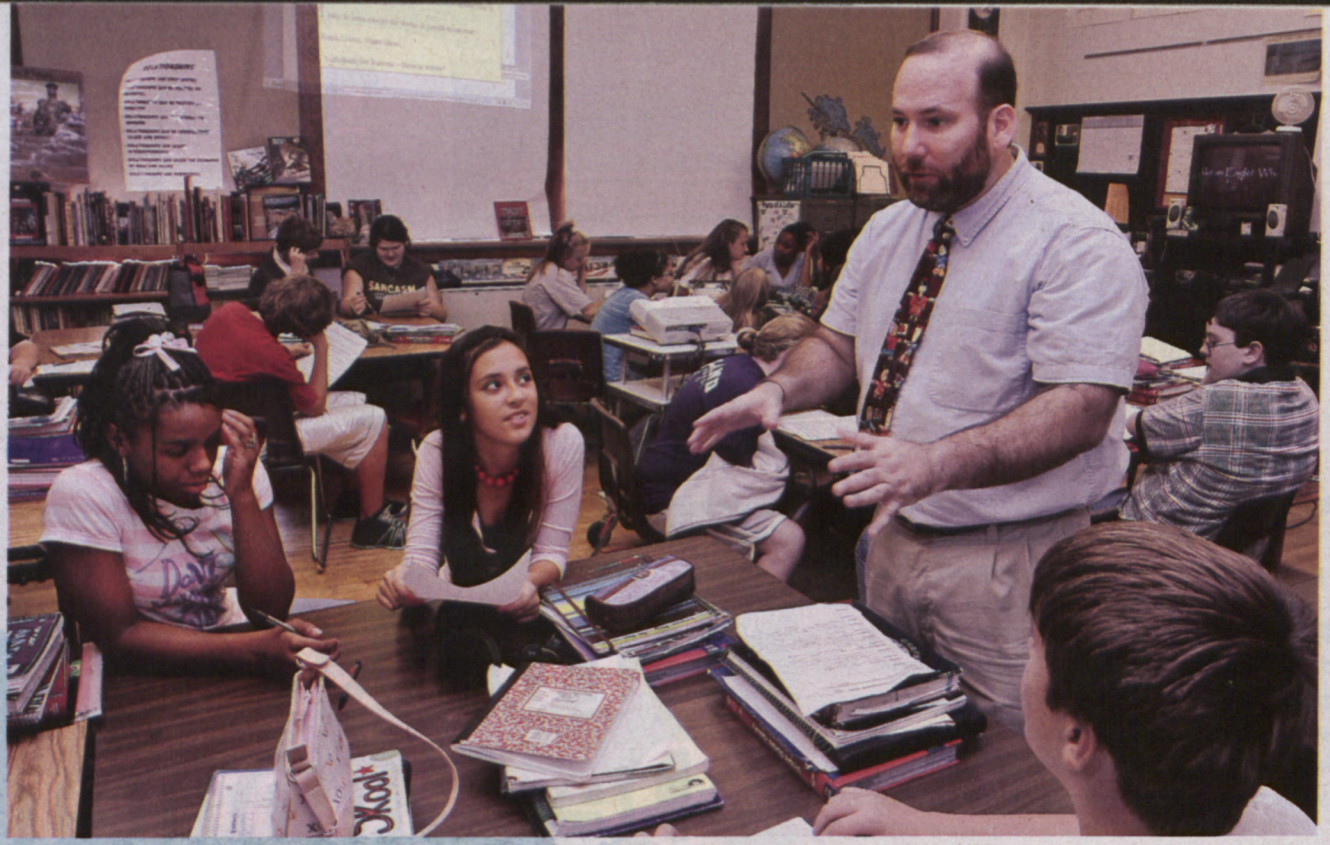


PHOTO: PATRICIA McDONNELL



Julie Craven in Cambridge (opposite page) and **Roger Thomas** in Louisville (above) say learning in a diverse classroom helps their students become better educated adults.

mostly to middle-class parents, but five years ago, it moved to a building near a housing project. Now it's about 40 percent low-income, a change that took some adjusting. "Some of the kids coming in had lower test scores and struggled over big words, but they were readers and thinkers," she says. "They forced us to teach better." Craven and her colleagues work to expand their children's vocabularies, move through the material more slowly, and explain things more thoroughly. Craven says many middle-class students benefit from the new approach: "I realized that a lot of them weren't getting it as much as I thought they were."

Craven's 9-year-old is at the same school, and "he's got a whole range of friends. That will help him move around in the world."

But some affluent Cambridge parents don't see it that way. Over the years, they've repeatedly tried to maneuver their children into elite settings, followed by efforts by school officials to close loopholes, followed by angry complaints from affluent parents.

To Cambridge Teachers Association president Jack Haverty, that's just plain elitism. "Everybody should be on an equal playing field," he says. "This is public education and it should serve everybody the same way."

Researcher Kahlenberg says studies indicate that having low-income students in a class won't hurt the test scores of middle-class students so long as the majority are middle class, presumably because the majority sets the school culture. He says solid evidence backs Julie Craven's belief that diversity is good for all students.

Gary Orfield, head of The Civil Rights Project, is in favor of integrating students by social class, but he urges educators not to give up on other approaches that can bring students of different races together. For example, he says, the Court did not forbid districts from assigning students on the basis of where they live, so schools can legally set aside a certain number of seats at a school for each neighborhood. Ironically, since housing is often segregated, guaranteeing seats to every neighborhood is likely to produce integration in school. The Civil Rights Project, he says, is ready to help schools explore this and other approaches.

Orfield also says the Supreme Court ruling is a wake-up call to educators to get more active in politics. "If the last Presidential election had gone differently," he says, "the ruling would have been 6 to 3 in the other direction." nea

Send comments on this story to ajehlen@nea.org.

THE RULING

Does the Supreme Court's 5–4 ruling against desegregation in Louisville and Seattle block any effort to integrate White and minority children in our schools?

Not quite.

Justice Anthony Kennedy, who provided the crucial fifth vote against Louisville and Seattle, wrote that school districts can use "race-conscious measures" to counter segregation if they do it without treating individual students differently on the basis of their race. As examples of allowable measures, he mentioned magnet schools, site selection for new school buildings, and redrawing attendance zones.

It's the particular way these two districts used race in deciding student assignments that Kennedy felt was unconstitutional—he didn't say using race is always unconstitutional.

Kennedy also said that the other four justices who voted against the desegregation plans were "too dismissive of the legitimate interest government has in ensuring all people have equal opportunity regardless of race."

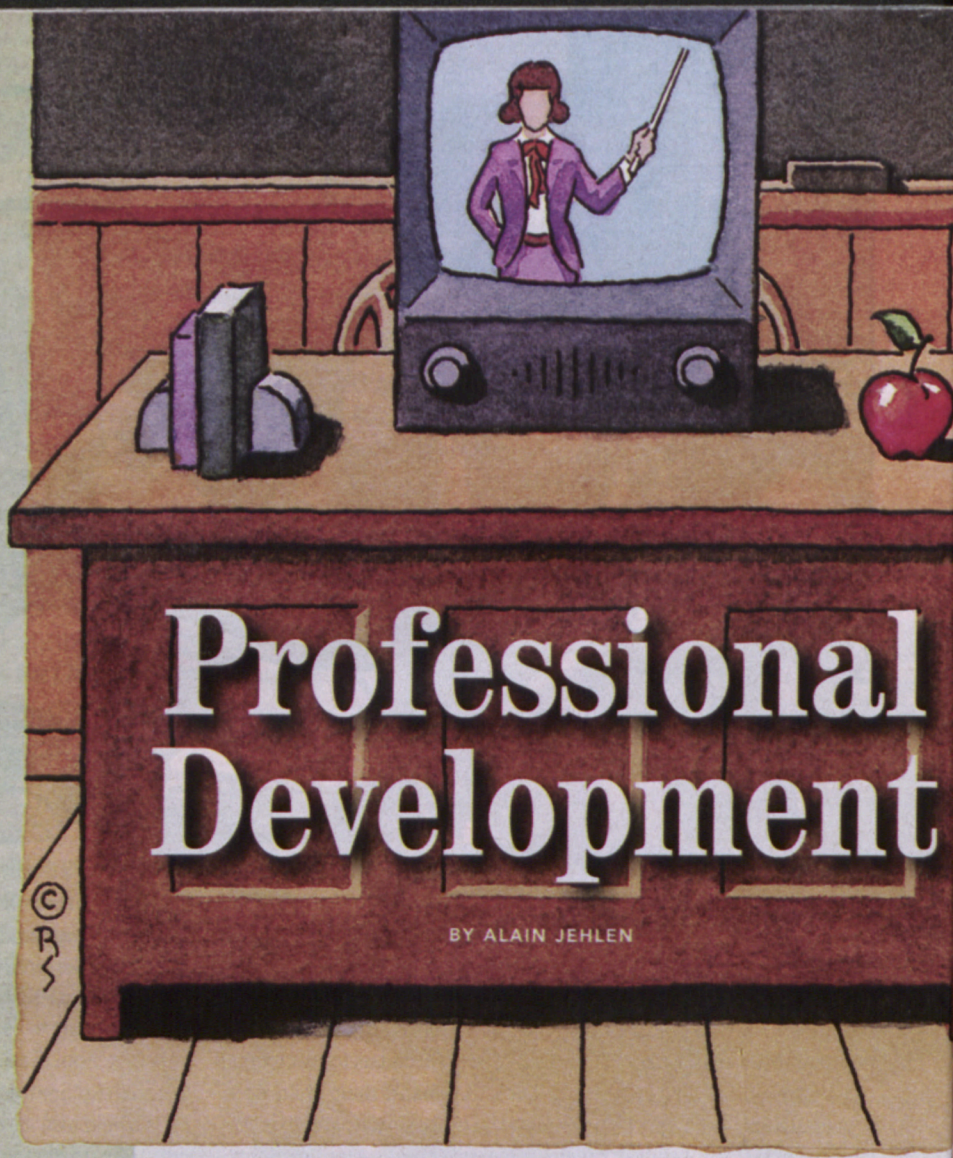
Some school leaders believe the race-conscious techniques that Justice Kennedy endorsed can't do much to stop segregation. But others say desegregation dodged a bullet with this decision.

nea.org

WHAT DO YOU THINK? SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES AND FIND RESOURCES FOR TEACHING DIVERSE CLASSES AT WWW.NEA.ORG/REF?DESEGREGATION.

PHOTO: SAM UPSHAW

The Best is wonderful. The Worst is… amazing!



Professional Development

BY ALAIN JEHLEN

Gladys Sossa-Schwartz, a National Board-certified English as a Second Language teacher in Arlington, Virginia, says she learned a lot in her university education courses, but she learned twice as much in school-based professional development. "When done right," she says, "it's the key to recharging teachers and giving them the tools they need."

So what is professional development "done right?"

It's all about the learner—just as in any other education effort, says Julie Washington, a kindergarten teacher who's in charge of United Teachers Los Angeles' staff development effort.

"It needs to be site-based and differentiated to meet different needs," Washington says. "Brand-new teachers may need to work on discipline. Veterans probably don't. They may want to focus on content or collaborative teaching models. The people leading professional development should themselves be experienced teachers with practical knowledge." Having a group of colleagues to learn with is also important, she adds.

How many L.A. schools reach that level of quality? Maybe 40 out of 700, says Washington.

NEA Today invited NEA members to share examples of the best or worst professional development they'd experienced. The range was enormous.

"Our district's commitment to professional development was one of the biggest bonuses of coming here. I couldn't be happier," wrote Wendy Otto of Hamilton, Wisconsin.

But an Ohio teacher, who asked that we not reveal her name, wrote: "The words 'professional development' do not conjure up warm, fuzzy thoughts of garnering oodles of information I can use in my classroom. They only warn me of the waste of…a day of my life I can never get back."

Here are three examples of staff development at its best, and three at its most awful. You can read more of each at www.nea.org/ref?profdev, where there's also a discussion board where members can swap information.

In many cases, NEA local affiliates played a central role in building the best programs. We include e-mail addresses so you can find out more, and maybe adapt one of these programs to your school.

BEST

Teachers teaching teachers

One of our English teachers works half-time as our staff development coordinator. She knows our best resource as a staff is ourselves! Frequently, our in-service days look like mini-conventions: teachers have several topics to choose from, and most sessions are facilitated by teachers. Our business teachers may lead a session on using the latest software, the librarian may teach staff how to help students do better research, and the reading specialist may help teachers learn new vocabulary acquisition strategies. The best part is, we get to choose!

Professional development time not spent as mini-conventions is spent working to further our five-year site plan. Every staff member is involved in every step, from choosing the goal and the interventions to deciding how best to implement changes.

WENDY OTTO, Sussex, Wisconsin
OttoWe@hamiltondist.k12.wi.us

Action research

During our Delsea Regional School District's November in-service, teachers choose from a variety of workshops on educational practices. Then they develop a yearlong action research project involving that practice, communicating with

ILLUSTRATION: ROBERT SAUNDERS

workshop presenters through follow-up visits or e-mails. Teachers also have the option to develop their own independent action research projects. Administrators encourage reflective practice and work with teachers on developing projects.

Then in May, we discuss our findings in small groups of teachers who are all conducting research in the same general area.

One example: A biology teacher created a Web page for one of his classes, with all his homework and worksheets. He taught another class without the Web page, and compared grades to see whether students did better with class information available online. The results: the Web page did help—but only for students who have computers at home.

MARY MOYER, Franklinville, New Jersey
MMoyer@delsearegional.us (President, New Jersey Association of School Librarians)

A little help from my friends

The heart of our professional development is to videotape ourselves teaching and get feedback from half a dozen of our colleagues.

We're used to going into the room and shutting the door, so it can be scary to show colleagues a tape. But we have ground rules that help everyone feel safe: What's said in our group stays there. We respect each other and listen to all views.

The program is voluntary, but staff members get paid extra for taking part. Each month, we discuss the work of one or two people. The teacher chooses which lesson to present, and what problem he or she wants help with. Besides the useful feedback, these sessions have helped us all see how our work fits with what other teachers are doing.

I'm a one-person art department, so before this, I had nobody to bounce ideas around with. I presented a second-grade lesson that uses numbers hidden in paintings to help children get familiar with numbers, and my colleagues gave me concrete ideas for making it clearer and better. Next time I do that lesson, I'll use what I learned, and my kids will benefit. That's the bottom line.

MAUREEN GUNDERSON, LeCenter, Minnesota
gunderson.maureen@lc.k12.mn.us
(Read about a related approach called "Critical Friends" at www.nea.org/ref?criticalfriends.)

WORST

Six long hours

Our Association requested that the staff be allowed to plan an in-service day. The central office agreed. But a month before it was to happen, they backtracked and said they would be in charge. Ten days before the event, the superintendent dumped the planning in the lap of the curriculum director.

At our building, we wound up with a speaker who did not address any teaching methods, curriculum, or activities that would remotely meet the needs of our large and varied staff. His opening statement was, "I only found out about this program less than a week ago, and I was actually in Europe."

He talked for approximately six hours. Don't ask me what he talked about—I couldn't tell you. In fact, you could look around and see people reading, grading papers, doing crossword puzzles. If we planned our classroom activities the way they planned this professional development, we would be fired. And rightfully so.

GAIL, Ohio

Déjà vu all over again

We have a very experienced staff and we are continually trained over and over again on how to write [Individualized Education Program] goals or how to record data—which we have all been doing for some 20+ years!

Sometimes we receive "computer training" from our arrogant young computer man. He usually trains us on programs we do not have yet, so by the time we get them, everyone has forgotten.

We all have paraprofessionals, but instead of training them along with us so they are not in the dark, we are told to "find something worthwhile for our aides to do to keep them busy."

We work with special needs children every day. First aid, CPR, behavior management, where are they? They have been suggested numerous times to deaf ears.

CAROL, Pennsylvania

Where were you on September 11?

On September 11, 2001, we attended a mandatory meeting called at the last minute. You might think it was to discuss how to deal with the effects of 9/11 on our students, but you'd be wrong. It was to pressure us into buying prepaid legal services from the brother and sister-in-law of the principal.

We were stuck at school until after 5 p.m. listening to a sales pitch when most of us wanted to get home to our families or our churches.

DEBBIE, Georgia

Send comments on this story to ajehlen@nea.org.

THE NEA ACADEMY

Learn Online

NEA recently launched the NEA Academy to provide online staff development for teachers and education support professionals. The first offerings include the successful "I Can Do It" classroom management program.

A task force of members and staff is selecting the best programs for the Academy. To make best use of the offerings, organize a group at your school to take courses together. For example, watch the first hour of "I Can Do It" on rules and procedures, talk about the ideas, try them, and evaluate together.

NEA intends to develop the Academy into the top professional development site on the Web. To learn more, go to www.neaacademy.org.

Making the Connection

Service-learning links curriculum to the real world

BY CINDY LONG

In 1986, millions of people — many of them students — planned to form a human chain across the continental United States as a charity event. The much-hyped "Hands Across America" was supposed to raise money to fight homelessness and teach students something about civic action. Unfortunately, it fell short of its goal, and students who took part remember little more than having to give up part of their Sunday to join a confused jumble of people clasping hands.

Like "Hands Across America," mandatory community service requirements of the 1980s and 90s sometimes fell short of their lofty goals. But times have changed. Today's trend is service-learning, where teachers help students devise service projects that meet a community need as well as the requirements of the curriculum. A classroom lesson on the Vietnam War might be followed by a project that helps local disabled veterans, for example. With a little planning and imagination, service learning can have a profound impact on how students absorb course material. And by meeting the needs of their own towns or cities and interacting face-to-face with the people they're helping, students witness how their actions can make a lasting difference, like these science students in Nevada and northern Virginia did.

PROJECT:
Star Party

CURRICULUM TIE-IN: Native American heritage meets astronomy as students from McDermitt Combined School plot an economic revival.

The ranching and farming town of McDermitt sits on the Nevada-Oregon border. The state line runs right through the old White Horse Inn, where patrons used to order food on the Oregon side to avoid Nevada sales tax. Like many local businesses, the hotel and saloon have long been shuttered. When the mercury mine shut down about 15 years ago, the town's already feeble economy collapsed and the jobless rate for residents — many from the Paiute-Shoshone Indian reservation — shot up to more than 50 percent, bringing crime and substance abuse with it. So the students of the McDermitt Combined School came up with a project that not only fulfills their state science standards, but also aims to get their town's economy back on track.

"They don't want to sit back and let us continue living in poverty," says John Moddrell, principal of the K-12 school, which has about 156 students. "A lot of kids leave our community when they graduate, but [these students] want to make a difference."

Led by science teacher and service-learning coordinator Mary Baird, junior high and high school students surveyed members of the community to find out their hopes for the town. Residents overwhelmingly said they wanted a better job market and to attract the legions of tourists rolling across the West in campers and RVs. But they were against bringing more casinos to the area.

A flash of inspiration arrived a couple of weeks later when four powerful telescopes were delivered to the school through a science education grant. The students decided to hold a stargazing party where community members and visiting tourists could look at the stars and planets while they shared what they'd learned about the solar system in astronomy class. To weave in a piece of their culture, the students would also share Native American traditions and star myths, like the story of a clumsy coyote who tipped over a jar and scattered the stars into the constellations.

At the first star party held last fall, the telescopes were set up in the football field and pointed toward the vast nighttime sky. High school students designed exhibits about the solar system in the gym for visitors to pass through before gathering outside on the field. The older students also teamed up with elementary students to help the younger kids explain to visitors what they'd learned about the universe and to share Native American lore.

"The first party was so successful, we're holding one each quarter, and the students have invited amateur astronomers from across Nevada to hear their presentations," says Baird. "After that, they'll publicize the event in nearby states."

At the "star parties," students also perform Native American dances wearing traditional attire. Junior Martica Crutcher performs the "Fancy Dance," which represents the movements of a butterfly. Each part of her attire has significance, from the eagle feathers in her hair to the brightly colored buckskin she wears.

"When you dance, it's like a prayer for your people," she

nea.org

A WEALTH OF SERVICE-LEARNING RESOURCES CAN BE FOUND AT WWW.NEA.ORG/REF?SERVICELEARNING, INCLUDING A GLOSSARY OF SERVICE-LEARNING TERMINOLOGY, LESSON PLAN IDEAS FROM SERVICE-LEARNING ORGANIZATIONS, AND AN INSPIRING STORY ABOUT AN AIDS EDUCATION PLAY.

PHOTOS: AMI M. BURNS, DANCING GIRL; CHARLES VOTAW, RECYCLING MOUNTAIN

says. "I live on the 'res,' and not too many of our people there were doing the old dances or learning about our traditions. They learned a lot about their own culture at the star party, and it got them interested. Now more people are learning the traditional dances and performing them with us."

Mary Baird says the star parties have not only brought the tribe closer to its culture, they've increased pride and empowered the community to build on the momentum created by the students. The tribe has voted to fund an RV park for visiting tourists, complete with teepees and RV hookups, and plans are underway to tap into the small hot springs scattered throughout the Quinn River Valley to create a local pool and park facility.

Martica Crutcher performs the "Fancy Dance."

"The real strength of service-learning is in allowing the kids to develop and plan out their own ideas, and to build stronger ties to the community through their schoolwork," says Baird. "The payoff is the growth you see in the kids. It's incredible."

PROJECT:

Computer Cleanup

CURRICULUM TIE-IN: Taking their earth science education to heart, these students became environmental activists.

When a group of kids in an Arlington, Virginia, neighborhood hustled away from one house after another with armfuls of computers, printers, and TVs, residents didn't call the police. Instead, they held their doors wide open for the H-B Woodlawn School students, who were removing unwanted household electronics as part of a curbside recycling drive they'd instituted.

The students hit on the idea during a field trip to a local stream where they were collecting water samples with their sixth grade science teacher, Kathy Molina. In order to fill their vials, they had to step around an accumulation of garbage—and not the beer bottle/fast-food container/odd tennis shoe kind of trash typically found in suburban creeks. The stream was littered with computers, VCRs, cell phones and batteries, the runoff of a 21st-century neighborhood that doesn't know what to do with its obsolete electronics.

Arlington County has a facility for recycling or safely disposing of electronics and hazardous materials, but many people don't know about it and materials must be dropped off at the site. "Realistically, most people aren't going to do that," says Molina. "It's much easier to throw it away."

Molina's class was studying water quality as part of a lesson called "Protecting Our Watersheds," developed by Earth Force, an environmental service-learning organization. The lesson plan takes students through a six-step analytical process to identify environmental problems or threats in their watershed. It then helps them select a problem to address, devise a solution, and take action.

The students agreed the technotrash was the most obvious problem, and they knew they could change peoples' bad habits if they offered an easy, convenient solution. They also realized that, even if they educated people about the recycling facility, many wouldn't take the time to drive to it. So they dubbed their civic action project, "We'll Bring it To You."

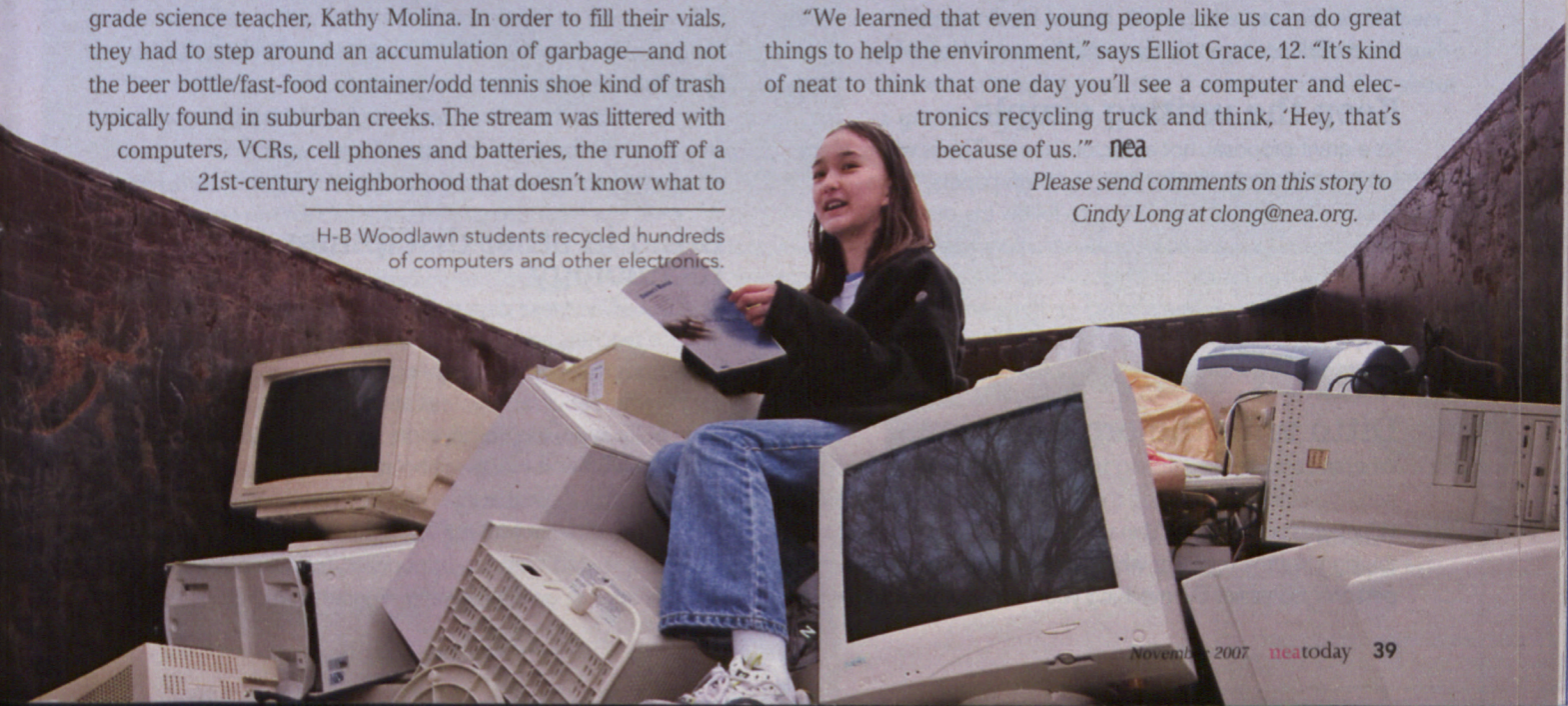
On a drizzly Saturday morning, they launched their efforts. Students set out with Molina, their parents, and volunteer teachers to load computer monitors, scanners, radios, and TVs from street curbs into pickup trucks. By the end of the day, they'd delivered 433 items to the recycling facility that might have otherwise wound up in a landfill.

And they didn't stop there. After learning that 85 percent of their survey respondents favored quarterly curbside electronics pickups, the students decided to take their case to the County Board. They attended two board meetings, presenting their findings and recommendations in a slideshow.

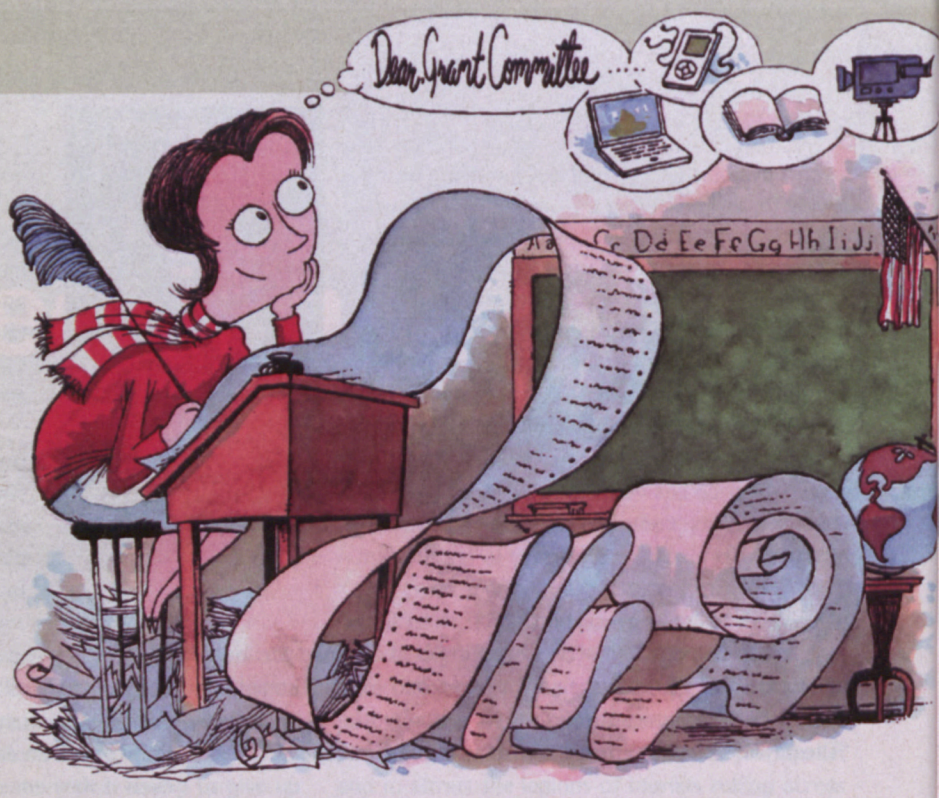
The board was supportive of the idea and promised to investigate the possibility, Molina says. In the meantime, the students learned about environmental activism, teamwork, problem solving, and decision making.

"We learned that even young people like us can do great things to help the environment," says Elliot Grace, 12. "It's kind of neat to think that one day you'll see a computer and electronics recycling truck and think, 'Hey, that's because of us.'" nea

Please send comments on this story to Cindy Long at clong@nea.org.



H-B Woodlawn students recycled hundreds of computers and other electronics.



WRITE A GRANT

Getting a grant doesn't require a Ph.D. A solid idea and a simple plan can go a long way.

BY CYNTHIA KOPKOWSKI

Educators with a plan to improve their students' learning environment often have to turn to grants. But just the thought of writing the requisite proposal sends many diving for the extra-strength aspirin.

We talked to those who are well-versed in the grant game to get their suggestions for crafting the ideal pitch. "If you can write a lesson plan, you can write a grant," says the NEA Foundation's Michael Thompson. He reviews the hundreds of grant applications sent each year to the Foundation, which awards roughly $2.3 million annually through 250 separate grants. Here are tips for catching his attention, or the notice of government agencies, private groups, corporations, and others willing to open their wallets and help.

Be brave!

Don't let self-doubt take you out of contention. When Nate Meyer, an eighth-grade language arts and social studies teacher in Downs, Illinois, came up with a plan to create a history-themed mini-golf course for his students, he took a deep breath and filled out an application for a small, $300 grant from the Association of Illinois Middle Schools. To his surprise, he got it. "While this was a drop in the bucket funding-wise, it gave me the confidence to apply for an NEA grant," Meyer says.

Keep the writing simple

It's a grant proposal, not a doctoral thesis. This is where many folks get hung up. "Some read like term papers," says Thompson. While it's important to follow the grantee's instructions, few will want a 25-page dissertation. Keeping it simple starts with the abstract or objective. For the grants that he reviews, Thompson wants a two- or three-sentence summary of the project. Then lay out the specifics of the program in bullet points. Don't try to compete with J.K. Rowling on page count.

Ditto with the organization

When it comes to organizing the narrative part of your application, the authors of *Getting the Grant: How Educators Can Write Winning Proposals and Manage Successful Projects* encourage thinking like the reviewer who will be examining it. Make that person's job easier by matching your headings and subheadings directly with the major and minor selection criteria laid out in the request for proposals. "When the reviewers can quickly and efficiently find the narrative associated with each of the selection criteria, they can happily proceed," write the authors.

Junk the jargon

Impose a ban on "eduspeak" and unfamiliar acronyms. Nowhere in your grant should the following sentence appear: "Using a group of school-age learners, we will endeavor to capitalize on NCLB-specific requirements and shift the paradigm for meeting tangible literary and technological benchmarks." Reviewers will be much happier to read: "We want to provide one class of third-graders the equipment needed to produce an audiobook."

Identify measurable points and objectives

Follow up that straightforward statement with specific, measurable goals. Action phrases like "students will demonstrate," or "they will complete a three-segment project" are a must, Thompson says. Nebulous terms like "students will learn," or "my class will come to understand," aren't specific enough when trying to explain how the project will benefit them.

Bring in other disciplines, technology

It's a fact of life these days that no classroom is an island. Science teachers have to work on reading skills, and social studies teachers have to add lessons on angles while teaching about the pyramids at Giza. Grantees are often looking for this type of cross-pollination, too, to get more bang for their buck. Pulling in one or two other subjects will bolster your proposal.

Also, analyze your activity and determine whether there is a way to strengthen it with the use of electronics or the development of a related Web site or podcast. The technological "gee whiz" factor can go a long way with grant committees.

ILLUSTRATION: DAVID CLARK; PHOTO: MARK TADE/GAZETTE COMMUNICATIONS

Ask for help

San Luis, Arizona, math teacher Jesus Arrizon wouldn't have considered writing a proposal until his district grants coordinator encouraged him and offered to help him apply for a grant for his program for high-risk middle school students. Coordinators can also be invaluable when it comes to carving out the time to tackle a grant proposal. Arrizon was worried that lack of time would be an issue, but "at the end of [the first grant process] I said, 'Okay, I'm not going to let these opportunities go by,'" he says.

And the help doesn't have to come from someone who's on the district payroll. When Beth Swantz, a fourth-grade teacher in Kalona, Iowa, was trying for a technology grant recently, she asked her husband—who is neither a teacher nor a techie—to read it and see if it made sense to him. Fresh eyes can scan your proposal for embarrassing typos or grammatical errors.

ON THE WEB

Turn Cache into Cash

Typing "education grants" into Google yields well over a million hits. But never fear. We've compiled some helpful sites for education grants or tips on landing them.

www.neafoundation.org/grants.htm—NEA annually awards about $2.3 million in grants. Get deadlines and sample grant packages here.

http://e-grants.ed.gov/egHome.asp—The feds' site requires registration, but it's free and simple (we promise), and it includes a helpful, personalized system for tracking your application package.

www.fundsnetservices.com/searchresult.php?sbcat_id=6—A vast collection of links to public and corporate grants for education programs.

www.learningis4everyone.org/content/category/1/47/2/—A roundup of grants from such groups as Nickelodeon television network, Best Buy, and the U.S. Senate.

www.k12grants.org/newsletter.htm—A helpful resource for grant novices. The bimonthly e-newsletter is free.

http://school.discovery.com/schrockguide/business/grants.html—A listing of sites to help you find grants for everything from math and science to reading and libraries.

www.teachers.net/archive/grants.html—A no-frills site, but it clearly lays out the basics for writing each portion of a grant. Extra goodies include a sample cover letter and an exhaustive list of resources.

Teachers from tiny Kalona Elementary aren't afraid to hunt down big money.

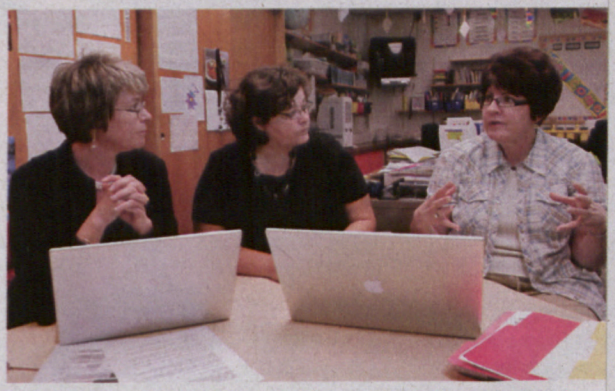
What is it about the tiny school of 250 students perched in rural Kalona, Iowa, (population, 2,293) that makes people want to give it so much money? In the past year, teachers at Kalona Elementary snagged nearly three-quarters of a million dollars in grants.

Fourth-grade teacher Beth Swantz and media specialist Phyllis Casper got a $25,000 grant from the state and a $5,000 grant from the NEA Foundation to teach students oral history skills through podcasting. Gym teacher Jackie Bailey and guidance counselor Nora Kehoe earned $10,000 from the state for a program to get students eating a "mystery vegetable or fruit" every Friday and to outfit every student with custom-fitted bike helmets. Colleague Suzie Swartzendruber, a Title I reading and math and ESL teacher, landed the biggest fish of all: $600,000 in federal grant money for a three-year program teaching Arabic to all students at Kalona and a neighboring elementary school. "It's very, very unusual," acknowledges Swantz, who is proud of the staff's prowess.

It starts with educators' desire to innovate, to stretch the limits of required curriculum even if it means doing the legwork to fund the extras. "Teachers like me are saying, 'What else can I do because I'm tired of all the textbook rigamarole,'" Swantz says. "With all the testing...I had given up almost all the fun things about teaching." She brought the fun back with a plan to get money for iPods and microphones for her students to record interviews that would ultimately become oral history podcasts (Swantz made sure her idea aligned with state standards).

A supportive administration is crucial, Kalona's teachers say. Their former principal encouraged those who were interested to seek grant opportunities to enhance required lessons, Swantz says. Colleagues can provide invaluable feedback, too, says Swartzendruber. "If I have an idea and take it to my administrators, if it sounds lousy, they'll let me know."

Going for a grant isn't limited to teachers of core subjects, says Bailey. "I knew that there are quite a number of PE grants. My problem is just finding the time to sit down and write it and know what I'm doing." When she feels unsure, Bailey taps her fellow teachers who have more experience with grants. "We have such a community spirit here that if someone finds out about a grant, they share the information."



Suzie Swartzendruber, Beth Swantz, and **Phyllis Casper** have uncanny success when it comes to earning grant money.

bulletin board

BEST BOARDS

A great project I do with my students is a classroom newspaper called *The Two Ten Times* (named after our classroom number—210). Last month we learned about the Lost Boys of Sudan, a group of children who were separated from their parents during the war in Sudan in the 1980s. We wrote news articles telling the amazing and true story of these children for *The Two Ten Times*. It was great because the students learned about history, culture, and geography, and were exposed to an interesting new genre!

AMINA RAFIQ
Queens, New York

The New York Times
"All the News That's Fit to Print!"
Read THE TWO TEN TIMES to learn about
THE LOST BOYS OF SUDAN
South
Author Study

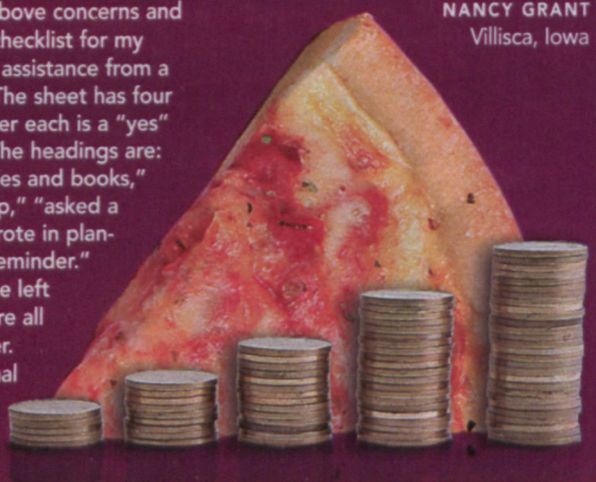
CHARTING PROGRESS

THE CHALLENGE: How to incorporate money skills, organization, responsibility, self-advocacy, and life skills all into one easy chart for my sixth-grade special education student who cannot count money well, forgets to bring materials, is shy about asking for help, and needs to improve on being his own self-advocate. His mother wants him to use the à la carte lunch items to practice real-life money skills.

I took all the above concerns and designed a quick checklist for my student, who gets assistance from a paraprofessional. The sheet has four headings, and under each is a "yes" or "no" to circle. The headings are: "brought all supplies and books," "brought his laptop," "asked a question," and "wrote in planner without para reminder."

Listed along the left side of the sheet are all his subjects in order. The paraprofessional assigns a cash value to each subject. For example: 10 cents for math, five cents for study hall, 15 cents for English. When he completes one of the four areas for each subject, he gets (play) money in that amount. At the end of the day, the student adds up his play coins. (The key is to vary the coins and amounts daily for more practice.) On Friday he can purchase one à la carte item during lunch. His parents put money into his account for this. The student loves this. He is getting positive rewards and improving his coin counting skills, too.

NANCY GRANT
Villisca, Iowa



Generation Gap

During letter "Uu "week, I was showing my children picture cards of things that start with the /u/ sound. When I showed them an image of an usher (in uniform, complete with flashlight), I was met with perplexed looks. I explained about ushers at the movie theater or in church. One boy raised his hand and said, "Oh, we've heard the word before, but Usher is a singer!"

ERIN CLENDENNY
Kindergarten teacher
River Vale, New Jersey

"Mrs. Hammond! I'd know you anywhere from little Billy's portrait of you."

FROM THE NEW YORKER BOOK OF TEACHER CARTOONS. ©2006.

BULLETIN BOARD: AMINA RAFIQ; USHER: AARON D. SETTIPANE; PIZZA: LORRAINE KOURAFAS; COINS: LJUPCO SMOKOVSKI; COLLAGE BY GROFF CREATIVE, INC.

CHUCKLES

NAME GAME

As my first-grade class reviewed their new vocabulary words, I asked if anyone knew what the word "ranch" meant. One of my students quickly replied that it was the stuff you put on a salad.

JANIS HURD
Virginia Beach, Virginia

MR. WOODHEAD
OKAY, THAT'S THE END OF MY LESSON. NOW, LET'S REVIEW...
DECIMALS: THE FEEL GOOD HIT OF THE YEAR!
HEARTFELT AND HILARIOUS!
HIP, CLEVER, AND FULL OF SURPRISES!
INTENSE AND HAUNTING!
MRS. GIBB'S BEST EVER!

SEND IT IN

Got a great classroom bulletin board, cool project, or creative lesson?

Send photos and descriptions of your bulletin boards, class projects, and best lesson plans to: ckopkowski@nea.org. Please include your name, your job, and the community and state where you work.

For a weekly e-mail of questions, answers, and practical classroom tips, join Works4Me, one of NEA's most popular and useful services. Just send the message "subscribe Works4Me" (without the quotation marks) to **Lyris@list.nea.org**.

TOP TIPS

Thanksgiving Parties with a Purpose

Generosity First

Before Thanksgiving each year, I let my students know that even if they don't have something they want, there's always someone who has less. So they contribute to an outside organization, like a shelter for homeless teens, before they have their own holiday party. We have collected cans to cash in and raised money from other students in the school. No matter what, it has to come from my students' efforts. I want them to feel the joy that comes from giving.

DARLENE ROKER
First-grade teacher
Los Angeles, California

The Giving Tree

I ask families to send nonperishable food items that we can give to the needy. I have always felt it is important for the kids to know what they have donated individually, but also to see how much there is collectively when we all donate. Previously, the children drew pictures of their canned goods and put them on a bulletin board. Now I use a 6-foot-tall wooden cut-out of a tree and hang the actual canned goods from its branches. "Our Giving Tree" is such a concrete way for the students to see what a contribution they are making. When it's time for our party, they have the satisfaction of having given before asking.

HEIDI JORDAN
Kindergarten teacher
St. Augustine, Florida

Now We Eat!

I had my students prepare and serve a Thanksgiving lunch for their parents. The cafeteria staff cooked the turkeys, but we did everything else. We studied nutrition for a science lesson, examined different harvest festivals around the world for social studies, and made a shopping budget for a consumer math lesson. Using a grant, we went to the store to purchase food. The students made the centerpieces and decorations and had to write invitations to their family members. Each child could invite two people. The students also wrote an additional invitation to one staff member they wanted to join us for lunch. The families and staff members really enjoyed this lunch.

KIM WILSON
Special education teacher
Jefferson County, Kentucky

BOOTS: JEFFREY M. HORLER; SALAD: SCOTT KARCICH; MR. WOODHEAD: JOHN P. WOOD; TREE: JONAS STAUB; CANS: TINA RENCELJ, FENG YU, PHOTOCREATES; COLLAGE BY GROFF CREATIVE, INC.; TURKEY: MITCH HRDLICKA

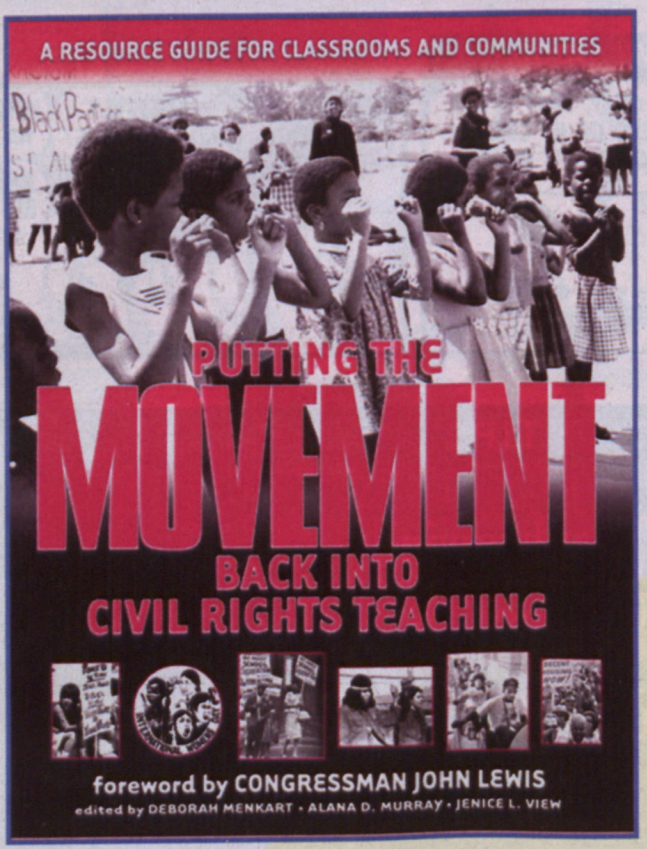
Order now and get Our Friend Martin (Luther King) video FREE!

Put the Movement Back Into *Your* Civil Rights Teaching

As one of the most commonly taught stories of the struggle for social justice, the Civil Rights Movement has the capacity to help students develop a critical analysis of U.S. history and strategies for change. By putting the "Movement" back into civil rights teaching, students can find their connection to history and learn about the roles they can play in fighting injustice today. The book includes interactive, interdisciplinary lessons, readings, photos, primary documents, and interviews with sections on education, economic justice, citizenship and culture.

- Includes readings and lessons, organized by grade level, for K-12 and higher education
- Connects the African American Movement to Native American, Latino, Asian American, gay rights and international struggles
- Highlights the roles of women in social justice movements
- Aligns with national standards for US and world history, language, civics and fine arts

With a foreword by Civil Rights activist Congressman John Lewis, this book is a "must have" resource for every classroom on a crucial time in American history!


A RESOURCE GUIDE FOR CLASSROOMS AND COMMUNITIES
PUTTING THE
MOVEMENT
BACK INTO
CIVIL RIGHTS TEACHING
foreword by CONGRESSMAN JOHN LEWIS
edited by DEBORAH MENKART • ALANA D. MURRAY • JENICE L. VIEW

Order your copy today online at www.nea.org/books. Or call 800-229-4200 for quantity discounts.

576 pp. Published by the Poverty & Race Research Action Council and by Teaching for Change (2004)

Item# 2030-8-00-D
Nonmembers: **$24.95**
NEA Members: $22.95

NEA Professional Library—*THE* Bookstore for Educators!

Shipping charges will be added to each order.

the guide ...to technology

> tech tools
> green gifting
> photo services

TECH-INDUCED TRANQUILITY

The right 21st-century tools can help you channel your energy.

BY KEVIN SAVETZ

Technology is supposed to make our lives easier, but don't you sometimes wish it would get with the program and, well, *make your life easier?* Bountiful junk e-mail, demanding mobile phones, and overburdened schedule-keepers seem to conspire to complicate our lives. Here's a roundup of technologies that really can lend a digital helping hand.

Start with your e-mail inbox: If junk mail is rampant, a better spam filter can separate the mail you want from the mail you don't. For the Mac, you can't do better than SpamSieve ($30, c-command.com/spamsieve). For Windows, MailWasher Pro ($37, mailwasher.com) fights the good fight against those obnoxious commercial e-mail messages. Your e-mail program may already have a spam filter built in, but these tools are more meticulous mail sorters.

The mobile phone is a miracle of our time, but some days it might seem more of a curse (and that might depend on who's calling). While new cell phones are loaded with an incredible array of features, a free service called GrandCentral (GrandCentral.com) can make the phone you already have more useful. GrandCentral provides you with a phone number, and lets you control what happens when people call it. The number can ring all of your phones at once (home and mobile, for example) so callers don't have to find you. You can screen incoming calls before accepting them, or choose to have peskier acquaintances go directly to voicemail without disrupting you. Checking your messages won't be such a chore, either; GrandCentral will deliver them to your e-mail inbox as audio files.

Here's another phone tool, this one from Google: Call 800-GOOG-411 for free directory assistance instead of paying your provider's inflated 411 fees.

Struggling to keep your family organ-

PHOTO: MEIKO ARQUILLOS

ized and in touch? Cozi (www.cozi.com) can be the tech solution. The free service includes a calendar that can be shared among everyone in the house—when one person adds something to his calendar, everyone in the house can know about it. When you're away from the computer, the service will send you schedule reminders via a phone call or text message. Although geared to families, teachers can use Cozi for team teaching and other collaborative work.

Finally, when you hunker down on the couch to watch some TV or a movie at the end of the day, technology can make relaxation time better, too. If you haven't tried a digital video recorder such as TiVo, you are missing out: The device lets you pause live TV, or better yet, you can skip right over the commercials. (Boxes start at $99, plus activation fee: www.tivo.com) TiVo can also make trips to the video store a thing of the past: The new Amazon Unbox service lets you rent or buy movies using your remote control. It's just like watching movies in a hotel room, without the overpriced mini-bar.

At the end of the day, technology can make relaxation time better, too.

It's New! NEA Click & Save

Deals and discounts for NEA members at hundreds of local and national retailers, including leading technology and electronics providers such as Circuit City, Dell, Panasonic, Toshiba, ViewSonic and Sharper Image. You can create a customized shopping profile to receive e-alerts on only the types of products you want. Get your holiday shopping started at www.neamb.com/clickandsave.

Go Green in Time for the Holidays

Co-op America
VOTE for your choice to be 2007's Green Business of the Year!
21 Things You Didn't Know You Can Recycle
Protect Your Voice as a Shareholder

Support Sustainability

Americans spent roughly $4.5 billion during the 2006 holiday shopping season. Imagine if that money all went to green businesses—those committed to environmental sustainability, sweatshop-free labor, fair trade, and cruelty-free products. Using Co-op America's *National Green Pages*™ (www.coopamerica.org), you'll find nearly 3,000 businesses that fit the bill and offer everything from recycled glass goblets to chocolate treats that are not the product of child labor.

Gifts We Could All Use

Longing to replace frenzied mall runs with peaceful family time this holiday season? You're not alone. The Center for a New American Dream—a group that helps Americans consume responsibly—says their national surveys consistently show most Americans "feel put upon by the commercialization of the season and want more of what matters...not just more stuff." Among the host of resources on the center's site is a downloadable template for Gift of Time Cards, which pledge the giver to spend time, not necessarily money, on loved ones. www.newdream.org/holiday/

Eco-friendly, Year Round

It's been dubbed "The Green CNN." TreeHugger.com is a media outlet with a global network of writers offering newsletters, videos, and radio shows for green news, solutions, and product information. Want to find out how other treehuggers keep their holiday season merry and bright? Get gift ideas for the environmental activist and the eco-challenged alike in treehugger's annual gift guide. And don't miss their year-round feature "How to Green Your Gifts." www.treehugger.com

PHOTO: ANDRESR

HOW I... Chose My New Computer

When it came time to invest in a new computer, Marsha Chevalier, who teaches grades 1-8 in Santa Rosa, California, and travels a lot, knew she wanted a laptop. Her other requirements were: compatibility with computers at her school; a big, clear display; lots of memory; and a solid guarantee. Chevalier turned to several sources for advice, including salespeople, a computer-savvy friend, and Web sites. "I checked online first for pricing, features, and specials," she said. Next she test drove all the laptops she could and grilled the sales floor folks about the differences between models. In the end, Marsha chose the Apple MacBook Pro laptop, and is "more than delighted" with the computer and the software that came loaded on it.

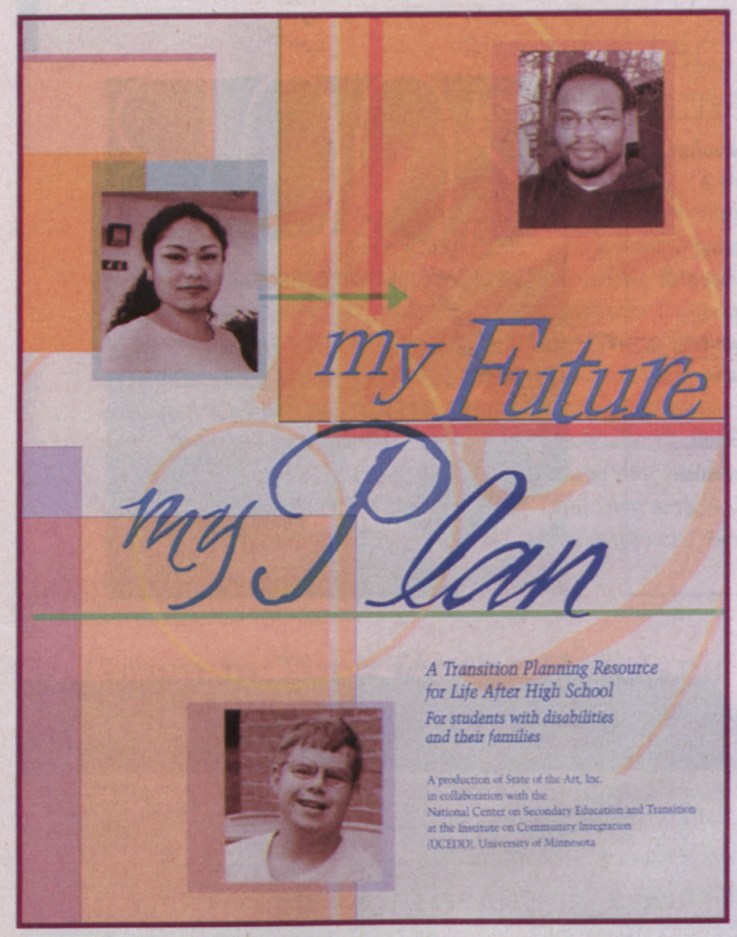
200B
200 BILLION COMPACT DISCS HAVE BEEN SOLD SINCE THE FIRST CD—ABBA'S The Visitors—ROLLED OFF THE PRESS 25 YEARS AGO. TODAY, SALES OF CDS ARE DECLINING, IN PART BECAUSE OF THE POPULARITY COMPETITION FROM ONLINE MUSIC SERVICES.
(SOURCE: WWW.TGDAILY.COM/CONTENT/VIEW/33437/113)

Comparing Online Photo Services

Online photofinishers' prints rival or exceed the quality from your local drugstore. Once you've uploaded your pics, these online services let you get creative. Here's a breakdown on what the leading sites have to offer.

*per 4x6 print	KODAK EASYSHARE	WEBSHOTS	EZ PRINTS	SNAPFISH	SHUTTERFLY
Price*	$.15	$.15	$0.19	$.12	$.12 – .15
URL	Kodakgallery.com	Webshots.com	ezprints.com	Snapfish.com	Shutterfly.com
Special features	35mm and Advantix processing is available, using pre-paid mailers.	Spend way too much time viewing and rating other users' best shots.	The site may be sparse, but it's easy to use.	Send pictures from your cell phone to an online album.	You can have prints shipped to you or pick them up at your local Target store.
Online sharing	Unique Photo Voice feature lets you narrate to friends as you share photos online.	Primarily a photo sharing community, Webshots sharing features outdo other sites.	Picture sharing is only available in the "classic" version of the site.	You can share pictures with friends, but they will need to sign up for a (free) account.	Share your pictures with password protection or choose to let anyone see them.
Fancy, fun picture products	"Collage prints" let you put oodles of pictures on one page, up to a 20"x30" poster size.	"Canvas prints" put your picture on mounted canvas, like a painting.	Picture jigsaw puzzles and calendars are among the items you can order.	Order mugs, greeting cards, and other products emblazoned with your best pics.	Custom framing service delivers framed and matted pictures.
Our panel says:	You can share photos with friends, family, and colleagues without flooding their inbox...they can just click on a link. —John Allman, counselor, Virginia	This site offers the most sharing choices. You can publish pics to your own site or blog. You can view professional photographers' work, and the staff blog is a fun read. —Staff tester	Creating personalized greeting cards is less expensive on ezprints than on some of the other sites. —Staff tester	Uploading is push-button simple, although re-arranging photos is still a little clunky. —Staff tester	My friends and family love the convenience of ordering their own prints from my "shared pictures" online. —Kristi Carpenter, 7th grade teacher, Iowa

AIRPLANE PHOTO: RACHELLE BURNSIDE; FOOD ITEMS: GROFF CREATIVE, INC.


my Future
my Plan
A Transition Planning Resource
for Life After High School
For students with disabilities
and their families
A production of State of the Art, Inc.
in collaboration with the
National Center on Secondary Education and Transition
at the Institute on Community Integration
(UCEDD), University of Minnesota

Available in both English and Spanish, ***My Future My Plan*** is a "must have" resource for special and general education teachers, families and students.

Published by State of the Art Inc. (2003)

*Item #2028-6-0S-D (English Set) or
*Item #2029-4-0S-D (Spanish Set)
Nonmember: **$44.95**
NEA Member: **$39.95**

*Components of the set are available individually.

Order online at **www.nea.org/books** or call **800-229-4200**.

NEA Professional Library—*THE* Bookstore for Educators!

Shipping charges will be added to each order.

Life doesn't end after high school

But for students with disabilities, planning for that transition can be challenging. Now, students with IEPs are required by law to have a transition plan in place by age 14.

My Future My Plan is a transition planning resource that encourages early, student-centered transition planning for students with disabilities. This three-part resource includes:

- A 30-minute videotape and discussion guide
- A workbook guiding students through every important area of transition planning, including: self-advocacy, legal rights, IEP meetings, health, post-secondary education, employment, adult services, transportation, and others
- A 36-page companion guide to the student workbook with suggestions for teachers and family members on how they can support students in the transition planning process

Robert Tadjiki

BEND, OREGON

High school special education teacher
USA Today All-Star Teacher, philanthropist

***USA Today* recognized your skill at getting students with disabilities and mainstream students to mingle. What's your secret?**
Create a fun environment [like "Tadjiki's foosball lounge"] that lets kids be kids, with or without disabilities.

What kind of field trips do you take with your students?
We go to either Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, or Seattle every year and always take a trip to the Oregon coast or Portland. Also, we rock climb and explore caves locally.

Favorite thing a student's ever said to you?
Sometimes students who are not very verbal say "thank you" to me on their last day of high school. That is very powerful.

What's the biggest project you've ever undertaken with your students?
Currently we are fundraising to build a 36-by-48-foot greenhouse. We also created a documentary called "Ready," about a young girl with learning disabilities, which has been accepted to the Bend Film Festival.

What misconception about students with disabilities would you love to eradicate?
That they can't do things. My students have dreams and want to achieve them. Also, people with developmental disabilities can work and are an asset to employers.

You adopted a second child from China this year. What's been the most surprising part of adoption?
How quickly you can come to love a baby you don't know, and how easily she can become part of the family. I was also surprised at how many children are left in orphanages. My wife and I now support several hundred other orphans through our art business, www.scrollsfromchina.com.

Why did you become an NEA member?
There are three generations of proud teachers in my family.

See the trailer *to Tadjiki's students' documentary at http://readymovie.com.*

SHORT TAKES

Faye Abernathy

RUSSELLVILLE, ARKANSAS

Retired counselor; e-mail activist

This Arkansas Education Association-Retired member e-mails retirees urging them to join the Association or take legislative action. Abernathy, 72, also writes articles for Arkansas Education Association publications and fields calls from legislators about education issues up for a vote. "Every chance I get I'm talking to people or e-mailing," she says, especially during election years. Expect a call in '08 if you're on her list.

Miriam Lynn

NYACK, NEW YORK

School nurse
International volunteer nurse, most recently went to Honduras

What injuries have you treated for children in South America?
Cleft lips and palates, deformities from burns.

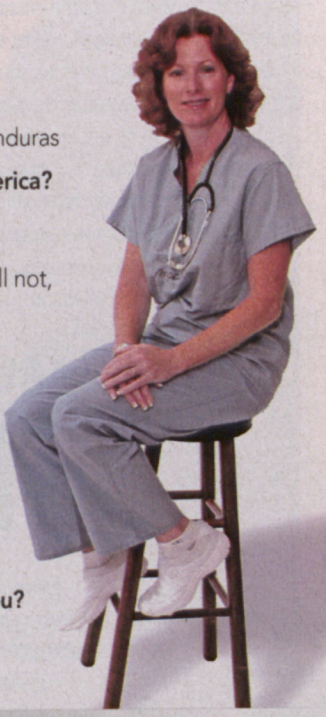
What was the most intense part of the work there?
Deciding who will be a good surgical candidate and who will not, then having to tell the family.

What items did you take for the people in Honduras?
Medical supplies, bubbles (they're therapy for cleft lips), coloring books, crayons, dolls, and soccer balls, which are a major hit with the boys.

What's worse—paperwork for school or for volunteering?
School

Why did you become an NEA member?
I work in public education and have children of my own.

Is there a misconception about school nurses that bugs you?
"It must be an easy job." It's great, but not easy.



PEOPLE POLL

What treat do you most look forward to in your Halloween bag? **Anything chocolate—58%; Extra school supplies—25%; Something tart and fruity—12%; pretzels and raisins, please!—5%.** Head to www.nea.org/ref?novpoll to cast your vote in our winter poll: What's your New Year's resolution?

PHOTOS TOP: DEAN GUERNSEY; BOTTOM RIGHT: ALAN ZALE; BOTTOM LEFT: COURTESY OF FAYE ABERNATHY

2.7 Million Minds

are Better than One

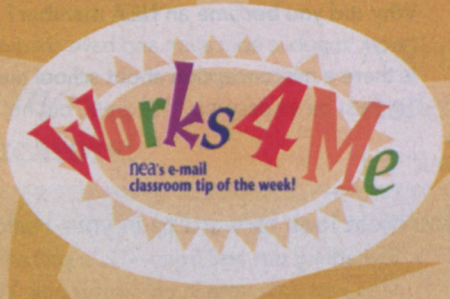
Get great ideas for teaching and classroom management from the best in the business — educators like you!

NEA's free Works4Me weekly e-newsletter brings you fresh, creative thoughts and insights about:

- teaching techniques
- curriculum content
- organization
- peer and student relationships
- technology

It's all delivered to your in-box once a week, from educators all over the country.

Sign up today and view the Works4Me archives at www.nea.org/tips.



resources

52 **Grants & Awards** Are you fascinated by all things Japanese? Apply for a Fulbright Award.

53 **Take Note** Inclusive Schools Week is December 3–7.

55 **American Education Week** A week packed with events that shine the light on American public education!

55 **Books by NEA Members** Find your teaching voice—compassionate, authoritative, effective.

56 **On the Web** The first major museum to launch a Web site before its doors open also uses innovative technology to create a network of contributors.

58 **On TV** A new, fun science show introduces kids to "green inventors."

59 **Heads Up from NEA Member Benefits** Special discounts from hundreds of local and national retailers are available at the click of a mouse.

61 **In Print** A heartfelt guide for nurturing adolescent learners.

62 **Diversity Calendar** November is American Indian Heritage Month.

Deadlines Approaching for the NEA Foundation's November and February Grant Reviews

APPLICATIONS ARE DUE BY NOVEMBER 12, 2007, FOR NEA'S BOOKS ACROSS AMERICA LIBRARY BOOKS AWARDS

In collaboration with NEA, the NEA Foundation will make approximately 50 awards of $1,000 each to public schools serving economically disadvantaged students to purchase books for school libraries. The awards are made possible with support from individuals who donate to NEA's Books Across America fund.

THE NEA FOUNDATION
www.neafoundation.org

Award recipients only will be posted on the NEA Foundation's Web site by March 3, 2008. For information, visit **www.neafoundation.org/grants.htm** or call (202) 822-7840.

APPLICATIONS ARE DUE BY FEBRUARY 1, 2008, FOR BOTH STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT GRANTS AND LEARNING & LEADERSHIP GRANTS

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT GRANTS provide $5,000 to improve the academic achievement of students by engaging them in critical thinking and problem-solving that deepens their knowledge of standards-based subject matter.

LEARNING & LEADERSHIP GRANTS provide opportunities for teachers, education support professionals, and higher education faculty and staff to engage in high-quality professional development and lead their colleagues in professional growth. The grant amount is $2,000 for individuals and $5,000 for groups engaged in collegial study. Recipients will be notified by March 15, 2008. Grants fund activities for 12 months from the award date.

For information, including guidelines and applications, visit **www.neafoundation.org** or call **(202) 822-7840**.

THE WIND BENEATH THEIR WINGS

Building a strong presence on campus is one of the biggest challenges that NEA Student Program chapters face. The NEA Student Program provides financial assistance in the form of SOAR (Student Organizing and Assistance Resources) grants to support efforts to recruit new members or organize a chapter. Chapters may apply for funding to recruit members in urban institutions, schools with minority populations or historically minority campuses, community colleges, and high schools with future teacher programs.

Applications for second semester efforts are due by **January 31, 2007**. Go to **www.nea.org/student-program/programs/soar.html** for information and a downloadable application.

ENVIRONMENTAL EXCELLENCE AWARDS

The 2008 SeaWorld/Busch Gardens/Fujifilm Environmental Excellence Awards recognize outstanding efforts of students and teachers who are working at the grassroots level across the country to protect and preserve the evnironment. This year, eight projects will be selected. Each winning group receives:

$10,000 TO BENEFIT the project

AN ALL-EXPENSES-PAID TRIP for three students and one adult leader to an Anheuser-Busch theme park for a special awards event

A FUJIFILM digital camera

PHOTOS FROM TOP: GETTY IMAGES, MICHAL ZACHARZEWSKI

100 T-SHIRTS to share with school and community partners
A TROPHY and certificate for every student and group leader participant.

From the eight projects, one outstanding environmental educator/leader will be recognized and receive:

A $5,000 award
AN ALL-EXPENSES-PAID TRIP for him or her and one guest to an Anheuser-Busch theme park for an awards event
A FUJIFILM digital camera
AN ALL-EXPENSES-PAID TRIP to the 2008 National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) national conference
A TROPHY and certificate

All entries must be received by 5 p.m. on Friday, **November 30, 2007**. (Note that project applications should be able to demonstrate significant accomplishments that have occurred prior to the entry deadline.) Visit **www.seaworld.org/conservaton-matters/eea** to learn more.

FULBRIGHT SCHOLARSHIPS SEND TEACHERS TO JAPAN

The Japan Fulbright Memorial Fund Teacher Program (JFMF), sponsored by the Government of Japan, provides U.S. educators with fully-funded three-week study tours of Japan.

The program is designed to increase understanding between the people of Japan and the United States by inviting U.S. elementary and secondary educators to visit Japan and share their experiences with fellow Americans upon their return. JFMF participants travel to Japan with other outstanding educators and learn about Japanese culture and education. Once participants return home, they further develop and implement strategies for sharing their experiences in their schools and communities.

Participants meet in San Francisco for a brief orientation and then travel to Tokyo. Participants attend seminars, meet with experts in education, government, and business, and visit cultural sites. Participants then travel in small groups to different cities in Japan, where they visit local schools and teachers' colleges and meet with Japanese students, teachers, administrators, and parents. They also meet with local and regional educational, government, and industry officials, as well as participate in a home stay with a Japanese family.

Applicants must be U.S. citizens who are employed full-time as teachers or administrators in any discipline for grades 1–12. Educators from all 50 states and the District of Columbia are encouraged to submit an application. The deadline to submit an application is **December 12, 2007**. For information, visit **www.iie.org/jfmf**.

HUMAN AND CIVIL RIGHTS AWARDS

Every year, NEA directs a Human and Civil Rights Awards program to honor individuals and affiliates who stand up and defend human and civil rights.

You're invited to help us keep the legacy alive and participate in the 42nd annual awards by nominating an individual, organization, colleague, or affiliate. Complete your nomination form online at **www.nea.org/annualmeeting/hcawards/index.html**.

Note these important dates:

DECEMBER 1, 2007—Deadline to submit nomination forms to NEA Human and Civil Rights
JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2008—Selection of awardees by the NEA Executive Committee, based on recommendations from the Human and Civil Rights Committee
JULY 2, 2008—Human and Civil Rights Awards Banquet, Washington D.C. In addition to the awards presentation, this dinner honors the NEA-American Teachers Association merger; highlights our colleagues' achievements; celebrates all our multcultural roots; introduces us to leaders of the human rights struggle; and recharges us for the challenges ahead.

For more information, contact Sabrina Williams, NEA Human and Civil Rights, NEA, 1201 16th St. N.W., Washington, DC 20036-3290, or send an e-mail to **sawilliams@nea.org**.

NATIONAL SCHOOLS OF CHARACTER

Every year, the Character Education Partnership recognizes 10 K–12 public and private schools and districts as National Schools of Character for their outstanding work in character education. Winning schools and districts receive a $20,000 award, half of which is used for outreach to other schools and districts. Winners may differ in their methods and implementation, but all have comprehensive character education programs that exemplify CEP's Eleven Principles of Effective Character Education and serve as models for others. The criteria used to judge award winners is CEP's Character Education Quality Standards. As part of the application process, applicants score themselves using this document.

Applications for the 2008 awards are due by **December 3, 2007**. Visit **www.character.org** for a complete list of rules, including a downloadable application and the documents mentioned above.

EDUCATION INNOVATORS HONORED

Cable in the Classroom's (CIC) Leaders in Learning Awards recognize outstanding educators, administrators, policymakers, and other community leaders at the forefront of innovation in education.

Applications are accepted in five categories: general excellence; cable partnerships for learning; pushing the envelope; policymaker excellence; and media literacy education.

Winners receive a $3,000 cash prize and an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, D.C., in June 2008. While there, recipients will visit with members of Congress to talk about their award-winning programs, and attend a gala event with policymakers, government officials, leaders of the national education community, cable industry executives, and other VIPs.

The deadline to submit an application is 12 p.m. noon, PT, on **January 16, 2008**. Applications are accepted online **only** at **www.leadersinlearningawards.org**.

ILLUSTRATION: LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Take Note

SHARE YOUR STRATEGIES FOR SAFE, EFFECTIVE TECHNOLOGY USE

By middle school, most students are online and using cell phones, and many adults are wondering how to make sure these technologies help, rather than hinder, safety and learning.

NEA Health Information Network (HIN) has partnered with the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children and Sprint to publish a bimonthly e-publication, **bNetS@vvy: Tools for Adults to Help Kids Connect Safely**. It's packed with first-hand stories, strategies, and tools to help teachers, tech coaches, parents, and guardians engage with youth to keep them safer.

bNetS@vvy is looking for writers, and offers a stipend for articles and ideas. If you work with or parent "tweens" (ages 9–14), they invite you to share your stories, concerns, and questions. They're looking for short, solutions-oriented articles on topics such as technology and special needs, diverse learning styles, gaming, meeting in real life, filters and online research, e-mail, and anything else that is relevant to you, your school, or your family. They're also looking for youth (ages 9–14) with stories to share.

Contact Caitlin Johnson, editor, at **internetsafety@nea.org** for more information. You can also check out the first issue and subscribe online at **www.neahin.org**.

INTERESTED IN ASSOCIATION WORK?

As part of an ongoing commitment to state and local affiliates, NEA is seeking potential eligible candidates for the 2008 UniServ Intern Program. Individuals who successfully complete the four-and-one-half week training program and a three-month field experience will be certified as eligible for UniServ staff work in an NEA state or local affiliate. All individuals must be committed to moving to the assigned placement for the three-month field experience. Eligible candidates must:

- **Be a female or ethnic minority** as designated by the U.S. census
- **Be an active NEA member** for at least one year
- **Have basic knowledge** and understanding of the Association at the local/state level
- **Be committed to pursuing** UniServ staff employment upon successful completion of the Intern Program
- **Have excellent** interpersonal skills
- **Be willing to participate** in intensive training
- **Be willing to resign** all Association offices at the local, state, and national level
- **Be willing to work** in a learning environment during day and evening hours, and learn new skills and attitudes

Interested individuals should send a letter of interest to Jackie Smith, UniServ Intern Program, NEA Affiliate Learning and Effectiveness, 1201 16th St. N.W., Washington, D.C., 20036. All letters of interest must be received by **December 7, 2007**, by U.S. mail or Federal Express. Faxed copies will not be accepted nor will letters received after the deadline. You will then receive an application packet, which must be completed and returned by January 31, 2008. Questions? Call Jackie Smith at (202) 822-7135.

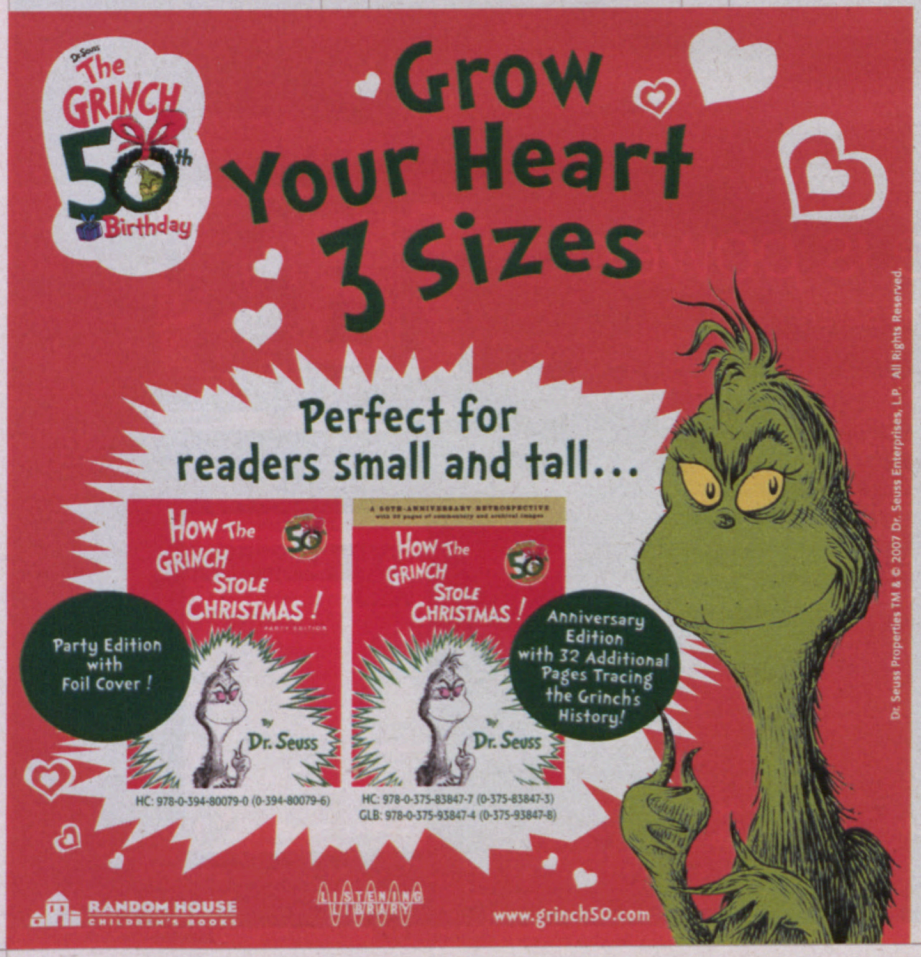
Note: NEA does not guarantee employment. Decisions about employment rest with state and local affiliates.

CELEBRATING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

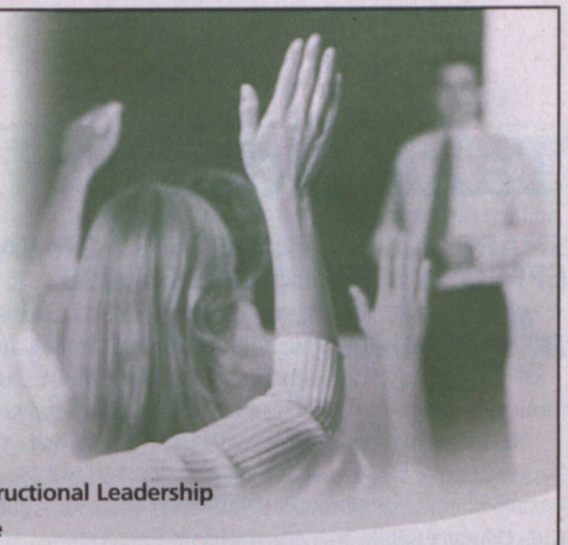
The 7th **Annual Inclusive Schools Week** will be held **December 3–7, 2007**, to highlight the accomplishments of educators, families, and communities in promoting inclusive schools that educate all children, regardless of their disability, ethnicity, or gender.

This year's theme, *Lessons from the World: Including All Children*, offers an opportunity to focus on international accomplishments and challenges in providing every child with a quality education, as well as discuss what is needed to successfully educate all children and to promote inclusive practices all year.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) estimates that there are 140 million children in the world who do not attend school due to gender, disability, or socio-economic discrimination. And too many of those who are attending schools do not receive a quality


Dr. Seuss's
The GRINCH
50th
Birthday
Grow Your Heart 3 Sizes
Perfect for readers small and tall...
HOW THE GRINCH STOLE CHRISTMAS!
Dr. Seuss
Party Edition with Foil Cover!
HC: 978-0-394-80079-0 (0-394-80079-6)
HOW THE GRINCH STOLE CHRISTMAS!
Dr. Seuss
Anniversary Edition with 32 Additional Pages Tracing the Grinch's History!
HC: 978-0-375-83847-7 (0-375-83847-3)
GLB: 978-0-375-93847-4 (0-375-93847-8)
RANDOM HOUSE CHILDREN'S BOOKS
LISTENING LIBRARY
www.grinchSO.com
Dr. Seuss Properties TM & © 2007 Dr. Seuss Enterprises, L.P. All Rights Reserved.

IF YOU WANT TO TEACH, LEARN TO REACH.



As a teacher, your ability to engage and inspire students is key to success. That's why all of Argosy University's education programs emphasize the interpersonal skills you'll need to make the grade. Because knowledge is one thing, teaching it quite another.

Earn one of the following degrees:

- **EdD in Organizational Leadership**
- **MAEd, EdS, and EdD in Educational Leadership**
- **MAEd, EdS, and EdD in Instructional Leadership**
- **EdD in Community College Executive Leadership**

In addition, Argosy University's 18 locations across the country offer degree programs in Psychology, Counseling, and Business.*

ARGOSY UNIVERSITY®

Learn more today at **argosy.edu** or call **800.377.0617**

Argosy University Administration | 20 South Clark Street | Suite 2800 | Chicago, IL 60603

Program names vary by location. Not all programs are available at every location. © 2007 Argosy University 2428 – 9/07

Knowledge is power

When it comes to online safety

Sprint and partners NEA Health Information Network and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children want you to have the tools to promote online safety to your students.

Learn more about the 4NetSafety program. Visit NetSmartz.org and NSTeens.org to download and view grade-level appropriate presentations, activities, videos, and other resources to educate, empower and encourage your students to make safe online choices.

And don't forget to subscribe to the bNetS@vvy newsletter, available now at neahin.org.

Sprint NEAHIN MISSING & EXPLOITED CHILDREN

NSTeens Website www.nsteens.org

E-Newsletter www.neahin.org

education. The NEA supports this work and urges members and affiliates to participate in the week's activities. For information, visit **www.inclusiveschools.org** or e-mail **inclusiveschools@edc.org**.

FEW TEENS GETTING MENINGITIS SHOT

Adolescent vaccination rates for preventable diseases such as tetanus and meningitis have fallen short of goals established by *Healthy People 2010*, a set of objectives for the nation to achieve by the end of the decade. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), less than 12 percent of adolescents ages 13–15 have received a meningococcal conjugate vaccination, whereas *Healthy People* goals are set at 90 percent coverage.

Meningitis, an infection of the spinal fluid and fluid surrounding the brain, is usually caused by virus or bacteria. Characterized by symptoms such as high fever, stiff neck, and headache, meningitis can be fatal if not treated early. Some forms are contagious, and may be spread through coughing or kissing, but not through casual contact such as shaking hands. Individuals at risk include college students living in dormitories; military recruits; travelers visiting countries with high rates of meningitis; and the elderly.

Most types of meningitis may be prevented. The CDC recommends that all children receive a meningitis vaccination at their routine preadolescent visit (ages 11–12). For more about meningitis and other vaccine-preventable illnesses, visit **www.cdc.gov/vaccines/default.htm** or contact **sjacobson@nea.org** at NEA HIN.

AMERICAN EDUCATION WEEK, NOVEMBER 11–17

Our tagline is *Great Public Schools: A Basic Right and Our Responsibility*. The week is packed with activities, including:

Sunday, November 11. Kick-off ceremony in Louisville with Student Program leaders

Monday, November 12. National Public Education Snapshot: 150 Years of Progress, highlighting NEA's achievements

Tuesday, November 13. Take Your Parents to School Day

Wednesday, November 14. Education Support Professionals Day

Thursday, November 15. Educator for a Day

Friday, November 16. Substitute Educators Day—vote for your favorite substitute educator at **www.nea.org/aew**. Results will be announced on Substitute Educator's Day.

Look for the online toolkit with additional information, activity ideas, tips for working with the media to publicize your events, downloadable resources—including this year's poster—templates, promotional materials, and more at **www.nea.org/aew**.

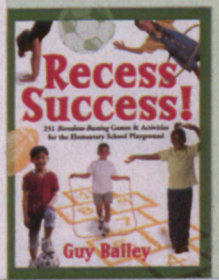
Get involved in AEW—visit www.nea.org/aew for activity ideas, downloadable tools and resources.
nea
NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

BOOKS BY NEA MEMBERS

RECESS SUCCESS! 251 BOREDOM-BUSTING GAMES & ACTIVITIES FOR THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PLAYGROUND

By Guy Bailey

In this collection are field-tested activities designed to eliminate student boredom during recess and create a safe, healthy, and peaceful playground. Try any of these 251 games to maximize student participation, foster cooperation, improve physcial fitness, and leave kids enthused and motivated. 193 pp. $21.95 from Educators Press. Visit www.educatorspress.com to order.



TEACHER DIALOGUES: A SURVIVAL GUIDE TO SUCCESSFUL DIALOGUES WITH LOW-PERFORMING STUDENTS, INDULGED STUDENTS, AND ENABLING PARENTS

By Ellen Bernard Shrager

Written to help educators reach students and parents in a positive and effective manner, this little book offers practical strategies for responding with compassion and authority in difficult circumstances. The guide helps teachers find their own voice while leaving everyone's dignity intact. 92 pp. $12 from Teacher Voice Publishing. Call (800) 462-8323 to order.

SCRATCH WHERE IT ITCHES: CONFESSIONS OF A PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHER

By Tony Rotondo

In this blunt-talking, humorous novel—loosely based on the author's own life—Anthony Augustus Angelo ("Triple A") reflects on his rise from a hard-scrabble childhood in a small industrial town to his career as a public school English teacher. Dedicated but cynical about the state of education, Anthony is not shy about telling us why. This good read is well-written but contains explicit language. 207 pp. $14.95 from iUniverse. Visit www.iuniverse.com.

MARTIN AND T.J.'S RACE CAR REPAIR

By Susan Kelly Hearn

Martin and T.J. live in the attic over a race car shop. Even though they're mice, they learn a lot from watching the crews work below. One day, Martin and T.J. see a bolt fall out of an engine. The car begins to lose races and nobody knows why—except the mice. Can they repair it themselves? Kids (and adults) will learn a lot about racing from this interesting, well-paced tale. Includes a teaching activity. Ages 4–8. 32 pp. $9.95 from Coastal 181 Publishing. To order, visit www.coastal181.com/nlm-working-April-2005/childrens.htm.

On the Web

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY AND CULTURE LAUNCHES WEB SITE

Years in advance of its estimated 2015 opening on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture is now online with the help of a $1 million grant of social networking technology and expertise from IBM.

The centerpiece of the site is a collection of reminiscences from ordinary Americans. These stories are collected as text, images, and audio uploads in the virtual Memory Book—where Web site visitors are encouraged to submit their own histories, traditions, thoughts, and ideas. Memories are then associated visually with other aspects of the museum's holdings and scholarship, bringing the museum's collection to life through this dynamic social networking structure.

The Web site also offers a sampling of collections held by the Smithsonian related to the history and culture of African Americans—art, ethnographic objects, archives, historic artifacts, and photographs. Also included are educational materials, including lesson plans for grades K–6.

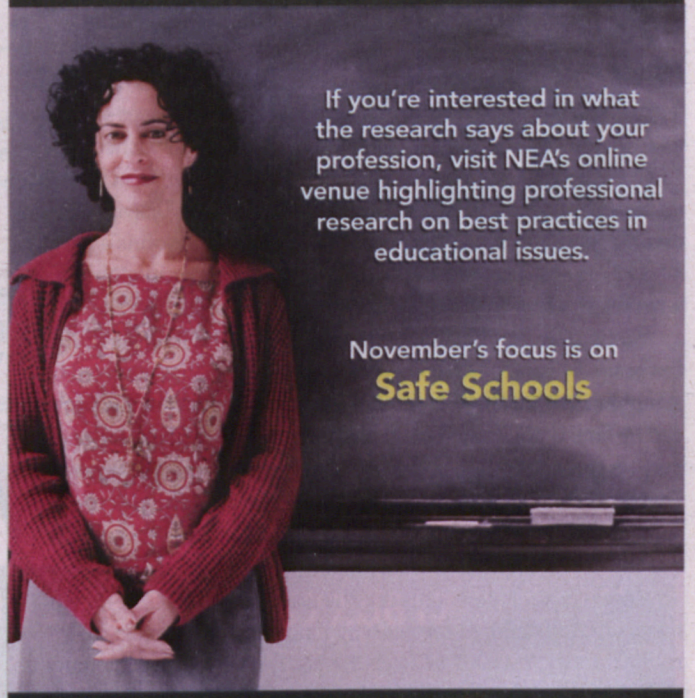
Visit **http://nmaahc.si.edu** to submit your own memories and browse the site's resources.

FROM THE MARGINS OF HISTORY, WOMEN ARTISTS MOVE INTO THE SPOTLIGHT

The National Museum of Women in the Arts (NMWA) in Washington, D.C.—the only museum in the world dedicated exclusively to recognizing the contributions of women artists—has unveiled *Clara*, an interactive database containing information on 18,000 women artists from all time periods and nations.

Named for Clara Peeters, a 17th century pioneer in the field of still-life painting (and the artist whose work inspired the founding of the museum) the database is drawn from materials in NMWA's extensive archives. To discover the artists whom history ignored, visit the museum online at **www.nmwa.org**.

Teaching Research Spotlight


If you're interested in what the research says about your profession, visit NEA's online venue highlighting professional research on best practices in educational issues.
November's focus is on
Safe Schools

Learn more at www.nea.org/ref?novresearch

THE CURE FOR SHALLOW 'ROLE MODELS'

What do Gene Roberts, Andrea Elliott, Walt Handelsman, and Natasha Trethewey (pictured, right) have in common—and have you ever heard of them? Author, journalist, cartoonist, and poet, respectively, they're all 2007 Pulitzer Prize winners. The next time you're looking for *real* youth role models or people who are exemplars of their disciplines, skip the movie stars and athletes and consider browsing the Pulitzer Web site. You'll find experts at the top of their game in journalism, literature, drama, and music; short biographies and photographs; and in some cases, examples of their work. To meet these remarkable people, visit **www.pulitzer.org**.

Celebrate a Year of Reading!

Looking to celebrate reading all year long? NEA's Read Across America 2008 Resource Calendar and toolkit—with art by well known children's illustrators—shines its light on fun books and book events. You'll also find posters, tips on Read Across America Day events, and links to keep reading on the radar throughout the year. Limited print quantities are available for order at **www.nea.org/readacross**. The calendar and its contents will also be posted on the Web site.

"You're never too old, too wacky, too wild, to pick up a book and read with a child."

PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES

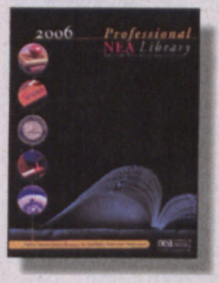
EDUCATION MARKET

LEAD THE E-LEARNING REVOLUTION

Be a leader in the fast-growing field of online learning with your graduate degree specialization in *E-Learning and Teaching Online*. Regionally accredited and 100% online (no campus residency), NCU offers bachelor's, master's and doctoral degree programs for busy professionals. Choose from 13 graduate specializations. **Visit nea.ncu.edu or call 866-776-0331.**

NEA PROFESSIONAL LIBRARY

THE Bookstore for Educators



It takes inspiration to keep students motivated and excited to learn. The **NEA Professional Library** has the innovative resources you need to revitalize your classroom. Each title is research-based and designed for application in real classrooms. Whether you're a veteran educator or brand new to the classroom, you'll find materials designed to help you meet the challenges you face every day. To order, call **800-229-4200** or visit us at **www.nea.org/books.**

STILL WATCHING LIVE TV? GET A FREE TIVO® BOX!

TiVo, the worlds first, best, and easiest to use Digital Video Recorder (DVR) lets you watch your favorite shows on your schedule. Plus, use TiVo as an education tool with keyword search. When your curriculum is on the *Middle Ages* or the *Civil War*, just type these words and TiVo will find programs on these topics. More, transfer shows to your laptop or burn them to DVD. It's easy with TiVo. NEA Special Offer: Get a TiVo® Series2™ Dual Tuner DVR for FREE (regularly $99) when you purchase any TiVo service plan. Act now! While Supplies Last!* Visit **www.nea.com/marketplace for more information.**

*Very Limited time offer, see website for details. © 2007 TiVo® Inc. All rights reserved. The TiVo logo, TiVo, and Series2™ are registered trademarks or trademarks of TiVo Inc. worldwide. Pricing, terms and conditions subject to change without notice.

NEA MEMBER BENEFITS

Look for the NEA Seal of Excellence on exceptional products and services provided to members through NEA Member Benefits. NEA Member Benefits is pleased to introduce the NEA Seal of Excellence, a mark of distinction earned by outstanding products and services offered only to NEA members and their families. Of the many products reviewed by NEA Member Benefits, only a distinguished few can earn the NEA Seal of Excellence.

EARN YOUR ACCREDITED M.S. OR ED.S. ONLINE IN AS LITTLE AS 14 MONTHS

Join the more than 1,200 educators who have chosen to strengthen student learning and enhance their careers with these accredited degrees earned 100% online since 2001. Learn practical brain-based strategies for increasing student achievement shared with 100,000 educators at conferences including NBPTS, NAESP, ASCD, and regional NEA conferences. APPLY by November 23. Start in January.

Call 1-866-SMART61, **nsu@brainsmart.com, www.brainsmart.com**

JONES INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

It takes a very dedicated person to choose a career in education. Those who take this noble path share one common trait – they want to make a difference. Our comprehensive Master of Education degree programs and Doctorate of Education are designed not only to advance your professional development, but to foster a sense of community and purpose in your career.

To speak with an Admissions Counselor today, please call **877-577-4543** or visit **www.jiu.edu.**

You May Have Completed All Your Coursework for Your Doctoral or Master's Degree

All relevant post-baccalaureate courses, including master's degree credits and approved continuing education coursework accepted for transfer.

• Accredited & Founded in 1979

Specifically designed for educators who possess significant post-baccalaureate coursework. U.S. Information Center 888-989-GRAD (4723).

www.iugrad.edu.kn
www.iugrad.com

INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY FOR GRADUATE STUDIES

COLLEGE OF THE SOUTHWEST

COLLEGE OF THE SOUTHWEST

Master's Degree On-line
www.csw.edu
A 2007 Best Western College
by Princeton Review

Available degrees:

Educational Administration
Curriculum and Instruction
Curriculum & Instruction: Reading
Curriculum & Instruction: Bilingual
Curriculum & Instruction: TESOL
Educational Counseling: School Counselor
Mental Health Counselor
Educational Diagnostics
School Business Administration
Early Childhood Education
Special Education

Fast Track
Exemplary Programs
$415 per credit hour with
25% discount for full-time
educators enrolled before fall 2008.

HCL/NCA Accredited

NEW SCHOLARSHIPS NOW AVAILABLE!
as part of a federally-funded Institute of Museum and Library Services grant

Earn your master's degree on your own time, from home with
Mansfield University's SCHOOL LIBRARY AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES PROGRAM.

SCHOOL LIBRARIANS ARE IN DEMAND. BECOME ONE... ONLINE.

- Award-winning practitioner-based faculty
- Personalized teaching via the web, email & phone
- Nationally recognized NCATE-AASL reviewed & approved School Library Media Education Program
- Accredited by the Middle States Association and certified by the Pennsylvania Dept. of Education

MANSFIELD UNIVERSITY
mansfield.edu

Visit us at: http://library.mansfield.edu/ or email: gradapp@mansfield.edu

CALL 1-800-577-6826 FOR A FREE DVD ABOUT THE PROGRAM!

On TV

A FRAGILE FREEDOM— AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORIC SITES

History Channel Classroom, November 13, 6 a.m. ET/PT.
Historian James O. Horton hosts a tour of eight sites in the United States important to the development of African-American communities in the colonial period and beyond.

INSIDE THE BODY TRADE

Explorer/National Geographic Channel, November 14, 8 p.m. ET/PT.

The "trade" is money for organs—the hidden commerce that can literally give life back to the dying. A worldwide organ shortage has led to a shadowy underground of illegal commerce in body parts. Reporter Lisa Ling travels to India, where donors sell their organs, and China, where black market brokers obtain the remains of executed prisoners. For adults and mature students interested in the mix of health, politics, and ethics.

ATHENS: THE DAWN OF DEMOCRACY

PBS, November 19, 9 p.m. ET/PT. Check local listings.
This two-hour look at how democracy began deepens our understanding of modern democracy, but requires that the idealized "golden age" of Athens be re-conceived. Athens was a slave state where women held no power. Those men who could vote were not above cheating, and secret ballot systems were devised to prevent corruption. Economics played an important role in the spread of democracy, for it was the chance discovery of silver that transformed Athens into a wealthy metropolis willing to take new military risks. With their military successes, Athens exported democracy to the conquered states. Social studies enrichment materials are available at www.pbs.org.

GREEN ROAD TRIP

The Science Channel, November 19, 10 p.m. ET/PT.
Students wondering how to respond to global warming will find answers in this fun new series on successive Monday evenings that highlights "green inventors." The premiere features Brian Hall, a drag racing champion who founded an electric vehicles company to develop off-road motorcycles and go-carts; and José Trickell from California, who built a "veggie bus" to highlight his other invention—the Fuel Meister—which transforms used cooking oil into bio-diesel. Information is at http://science.discovery.com/.

DESPERATE CROSSING

History Channel Classroom
November 19, 20, & 21, 6 a.m. ET/PT.
Richly crafted, this three-part account of the Pilgrims and their journey aboard the Mayflower is based in part on original source material from actual passengers. The Royal Shakespeare Company and members of the Massachusetts Wampanoag tribe re-enact the first Harvest Feast. Use this series to discuss religious persecution, Native American culture, and the importance of the Mayflower Compact as an early harbinger of U.S. democracy.

On TV listings are provided by KIDSNET, a national resource for children's media in Washington, D.C., www.kidsnet.org, and Cable in the Classroom Magazine *at www.ciconline.org.*

PHOTOS FROM TOP: THE HISTORY CHANNEL, DANIELE ANASTASION/NGT, LISA BOWE/©2006 AETN

Heads Up from NEA Member Benefits

NEA CLICK & SAVE—THE NEWEST DISCOUNT PROGRAM FOR NEA MEMBERS!

NOW NEA MEMBERS AND THEIR FAMILIES can access special discounts from hundreds of local and national retailers. Whether you're looking for gourmet food or flowers, travel and vacation deals, entertainment tickets, home décor or electronics, sports or wellness products, wedding gifts, or even clothing for the entire family, NEA Click & Save offers dozens of options for secure, online shopping.

You can even set up automatic e-mail alerts for the kinds of products and companies you choose. With the holidays approaching, the timing couldn't be better.

Visit **www.neamb.com/clickandsave** to claim your discounts today!

AND SPEAKING OF THE HOLIDAYS...

WHY NOT MAKE YOUR HOLIDAY TRAVEL PLANS and take advantage of a great deal from Alamo, a provider of the NEA Car Rental Program®.

From now until the end of June, 2008, Alamo is offering a $25 coupon on a three-day (or more) rental of convertibles, minivans, and SUVs. Bundle up the family for a wonderful excursion "over the river and through the woods!"

Download your discount coupon or make a reservation online at **www.alamo.com/offer/neatodaynov**.

ONE-STOP SHOPPING ONLINE

THE NEA MEMBER BENEFITS WEB SITE is always your source for discount solutions for the holidays and every day. From magazine subscriptions and cellular phones and service to books, CDs, and DVDs, classroom supplies, long distance telephone service, car rentals, and vacation travel programs, **www.neamb.com** is the place to go!

LAST YEAR, MEMBERS DROVE OVER 11 MILLION MILES USING THE NEA CAR RENTAL PROGRAM.

Ruben R. Murillo, Jr.
Elementary Teacher • Las Vegas, Nevada

"The NEA Fund for Children and Public Education helps bring us together to elect and support legislators who believe in the great value of Public Education. I've seen it work to bring about positive change in my state. To all my colleagues I say, "Please, give to The NEA Fund!"

Contribute to The NEA Fund for Children & Public Education.
Go to **www.neafund.org**.

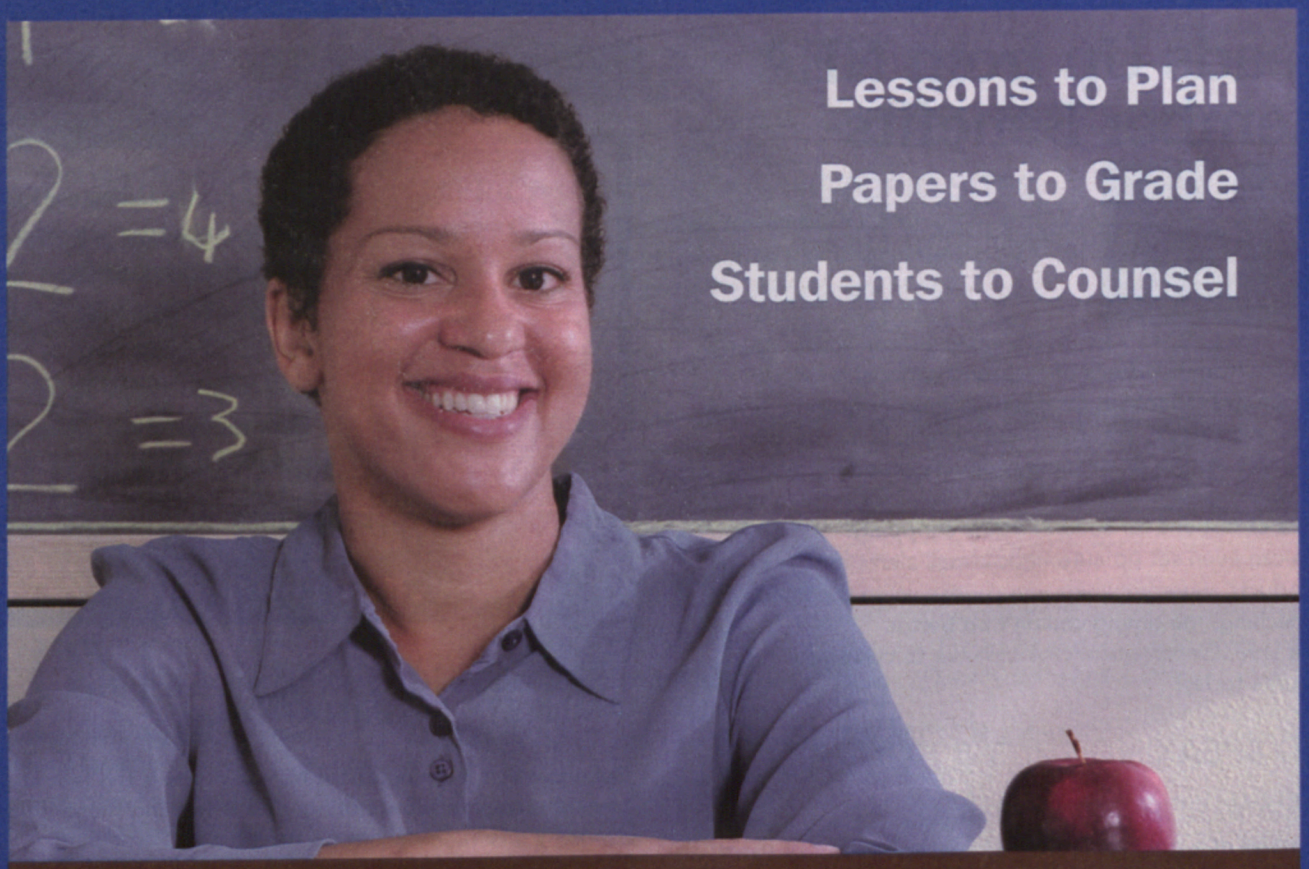
FREE CURRICULUM GUIDE FROM AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Believing that learning about human rights is the first step toward respecting, promoting, and defending those rights, Amnesty International has partnered with Participant Productions to create a curriculum guide that coincides with the release of Dreamworks Pictures' film, *The Kite Runner*.

Based on the best-selling novel by Khaled Hosseini, the movie follows the friendship of two boys during the final days of Afghanistan's monarchy—one from the ruling Pashtun class, the other his servant, a Hazzara, a shunned ethnic minority. Betrayal and war separate the boys, and years pass before Amir, who emigrated to the U.S. with his father, returns to Afghanistan to face the Taliban and his own inner demons in order to rescue his old friend's son.

The curriculum guide for high school students addresses the political dynamics in Afghanistan from a historical and present day context; refugees and internally displaced people; fundamentalism; warlordism; and other human rights issues portrayed in the movie. To download the guide and other materials, visit **www.amnestyusa.org/education**.

PHOTOS FROM LOWER LEFT: SANJA GJENERO, PHIL BRAY, © 2007 DREAMWORKS PICTURES



Drive to Bookstore?!?

With all you have to do, getting to the bookstore may seem impossible. That's why NEA has developed an online bookstore that contains dozens of professional titles just for you. It's called the **NEA Professional Library**. Find out what's new at the **Professional Library** by subscribing to ***First Edition***!

First Edition is a free monthly e-newsletter that is packed with the latest publications, "must reads" and resources that address the issues you face everyday. With your FREE ***First Edition*** subscription, you have access to special online sales, educator discounts and great gift ideas – all in one convenient place!

Convenience, professional resources and special discounts…delivered right to your inbox. **Sign up for *First Edition* today at nea.org/books and click "Newsletter Signup."**

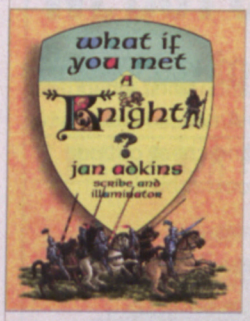
The NEA Professional Library – *THE* Bookstore for Educators

nea NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Great Public Schools for Every Child

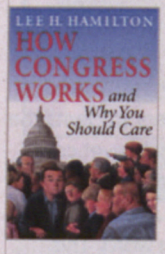
In Print

DECONSTRUCTING CAMELOT



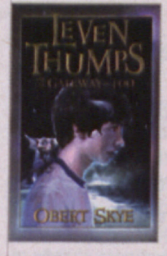
Knights were noble fellows who rode fiery steeds and wore shining armor, right? They were always ready for a heroic joust or to rescue a fair maiden or slay a dragon. Or not. Maybe they were ordinary guys just trying to make a living. Visit the real world of knights, a complicated and uncomfortable place, in *What If You Met a Knight?*, an illluminating and amusing romp through the Middle Ages written and illustrated by Jan Adkins. Ages 9–12. 32 pp. $16.95 from Roaring Brook Press. Go to www.amazon.com to order.

CONGRESS FOR BEGINNERS



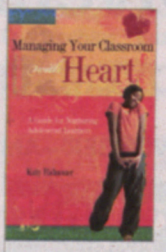
How Congress Works and Why You Should Care by Lee Hamilton, a U.S. Representative from Indiana from 1965–1999, deserves a place on the civics classroom bookshelf as what may be the first and only enjoyably readable book on the inner workings of Congress. Straightforward and easy to read—really—it's a concise, nonpartisan introduction to the functions, role, and impact of Congress, and how and why every citizen should be knowledgable and involved. 168 pp. $14.95 from Indiana University Press. Go to http://iupress.indiana.edu. to order.

UNLIKELY HEROES TO THE RESCUE

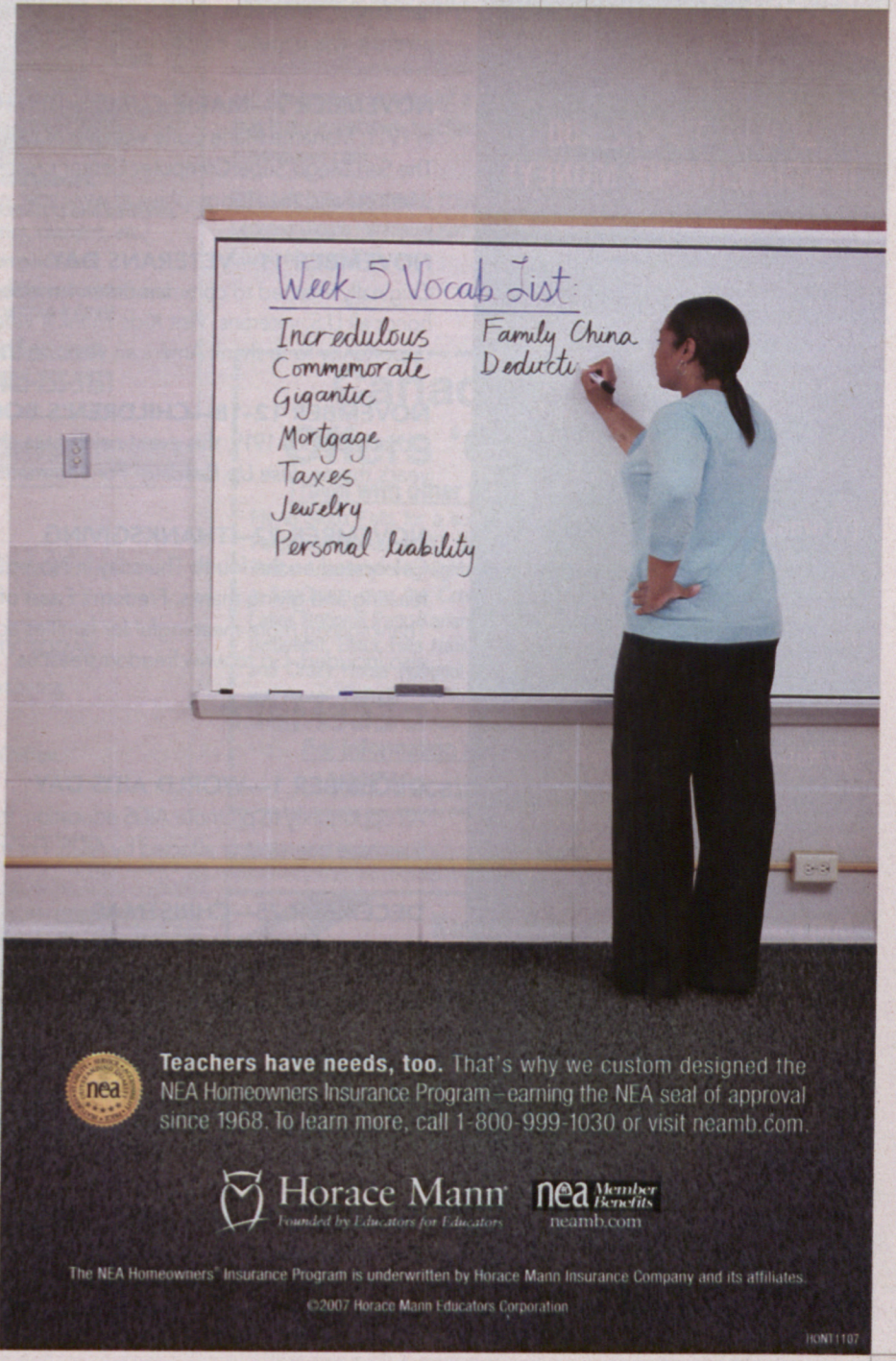


It's hard to be taken seriously when you're a penniless orphan who lives in a crumbling trailer park somewhere in Oklahoma. Nonetheless, with help from a talkative sidekick who resembles a cat, a moody, runaway girl with a peculiar talent for freezing people, and a sentient toothpick (yes), Levin Thumps will leave behind his humble beginnings and try to save a parallel universe named Foo from the evil Sabine, a "nit" who has trouble controlling half of his body. But only when humans dream. Follow? Never mind. Kids will enjoy *Levin Thumps and the Gateway to Foo* by Obert Skye, a fastpaced, wisecracking read. Ages 9–12. 348 pp. $17.95 from Shadow Mountain. Go to www.shadowmountain.com.

CHOOSING TO CARE IN THE CLASSROOM



Teaching is as much about students as it is about curriculum, but even the most dedicated teacher can sometimes feel defeated by the challenge of reaching distracted, disconnected, and defiant adolescents. In *Managing Your Classroom with Heart*, Katy Ridnouer draws on years of classroom experience to share an approach that will help you spend less time "dealing" with students and more time inspiring them to be and do their best. 178 pp. $25.95 from the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD). To order, go to www.ascd.org/books.


Week 5 Vocab List:
Incredulous
Commemorate
Gigantic
Mortgage
Taxes
Jewelry
Personal liability
Family China
Deducti
nea
Teachers have needs, too. That's why we custom designed the NEA Homeowners Insurance Program – earning the NEA seal of approval since 1968. To learn more, call 1-800-999-1030 or visit neamb.com.
Horace Mann
Founded by Educators for Educators
nea Member Benefits
neamb.com
The NEA Homeowners® Insurance Program is underwritten by Horace Mann Insurance Company and its affiliates.
©2007 Horace Mann Educators Corporation
HONT1107

SENIORS HELPING SENIORS™
SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

WIN UP TO $12,500 IN SCHOLARSHIP MONEY!

PNY challenges high school seniors to conceive and perform a project that will enhance the lives and meet the needs of senior citizens within their community using computer technology.

This intergenerational experience provides students a venue to connect learning, life and work while providing a service to their neighborhood.

(1) Grand Prize Team
One overall Grand Prize Team will be selected. A scholarship award will be equally distributed among the Grand Prize team winners at a maximum of $12,500 per team. Their school will receive 3 computers and monitors.

(3) Honorable Mention Teams
Three honorable mention projects will be chosen, with each team member receiving a PNY Flash Media Prize package valved up to $500 per team.

(All) Participating Teams
All entrants will receive a special surprise gift for entry.

For complete information visit www.PNY.com/education or call PNY direct at (800) 769-0143

Sponsored By: PNY

Diversity Calendar

NOVEMBER

NOVEMBER—AMERICAN INDIAN HERITAGE MONTH

This month observes the contributions and unique heritage of our nation's first inhabitants. Find downloadable teaching posters at the National Museum of the American Indian site, www.nmai.si.edu/subpage.cfm?subpage=education&second=pub. And check out our Native American booklist at www.nea.org/readacross/resources/nabooklist.html.

NOVEMBER 5—GUY FAWKES DAY

Remember, remember, the 5th of November! Still celebrated in England with fireworks and bonfires, this popular holiday recalls the 1605 foiling of a plot to blow up Parliament.

NOVEMBER 7—MARIE CURIE'S BIRTHDAY

In 1911, Madame Marie Curie won the Nobel Prize in chemistry for her work with radioactivity. The San Diego SuperComputer Center presents a collection of 16 significant women scientists and their biographies at www.sdsc.edu/ScienceWomen/.

NOVEMBER 11—VETERANS DAY

Originally enacted to commemorate Armistice Day, this holiday was eventually designated to honor all U.S. veterans. Visit *Kids Thank a Veteran*, a member-built site that offers students the opportunity to to thank American veterans for their service. Go to http://kidsthankavet.com.

NOVEMBER 12–18—CHILDREN'S BOOK WEEK

Observed since 1919, this event celebrates children's experience of the written word. This year's theme: *Rise Up Reading!* For information, go to www.cbcbooks.org/cbw/.

NOVEMBER 22—THANKSGIVING

Celebrated on the fourth Thursday in November, this American harvest festival is marked by feasting and giving thanks. Fredom's Feast offers free, downloadable resources to make Thanksgiving more meaningful for families across the country. Materials for educators are also included. Go to www.freedomsfeast.us.

DECEMBER

DECEMBER 1—WORLD AIDS DAY

An opportunity to promote AIDS education, this day is also a time to remember those whose lives have been lost or affected by AIDS. For more, see www.worldaidsday.org.

DECEMBER 25—CHRISTMAS

Historians date this holiday to the year 226, when Christian leaders met to honor the birth of Christ. Christmas is celebrated as a religious and secular event, marked by church attendance and gift-giving. Federal and state governments close, as do most businesses.

DECEMBER 5–12—HANUKKAH (FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS)

This eight-day Jewish celebration commemorates the retaking of the Temple in Jerusalem in the second century BCE. In remembrance, Jews light candles on a *menorah* and eat potato pancakes, called *latkes*.

DECEMBER 26–JANUARY 1—KWANZAA

A uniquely African-American celebration created in 1966, this seven-day festival reinforces connectedness to African cultural identity and is dedicated to the principles of unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith. Visit www.officialkwanzaawebsite.org for more information.

FUNDRAISER

WE BUY USED CELL PHONES
& pay up to $50 for each phone!

Some phones have no value. See purchase price list for individual models www.pacebutler.com

THE PERFECT FUNDRAISER

FREE COLLECTION BOXES PROVIDED

1. Collect inactive cell phones.
2. Box cell phone handsets and batteries only. (No accessories, chargers, etc.)
3. Ship FREE (with prepaid label)
4. We will sort the different models and send your check within 4 days!

PaceButler corporation

www.pacebutler.com
800-248-5360 • 405-755-3131

NEA ACADEMY

@neaacademy

SIGNUP

GET STARTED WITH NEA ACADEMY TODAY

•Online Courses •Advice & Mentoring
•Teacher Tools
•Learning Community •Dean's Office

www.neaacademy.org

NEA DUES TAB

NEA DUES-TAB® Insurance provides up to $1,000 life insurance coverage and up to $5,000 of accidental death and dismemberment coverage at no cost to eligible members. You can also receive up to $50,000 of accidental death and dismemberment insurance while serving on the job or as an Association leader, and up to $150,000 if death is caused by homicide while on the job. All at no cost to the NEA member. To register your beneficiary for this FREE coverage, call toll free 1 (800) 637-4636, Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. (or Saturday, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.) ET.

NEA PROFESSIONAL LIBRARY

Whatever your role in education, the NEA Professional Library is your source for books, Read Across America promotional tools, NEA logo items, and great gift or giveaway merchandise. Items are available through our online store at www.nea.org/books. Ordering is easy and secure!

We continually update the site to reflect new items, specials, and highlight upcoming events. Visit often – you don't want to miss a thing!

INSTRUCTIONAL AIDS

QuizMachine™ Buzzer Systems
Affordable, reliable, expandable
(800) 294-0494 www.quizco.com.

TIMESHARES

Timeshares
★ 60-80% off Retail!
Ask for a FREE MAGAZINE!
(800) 852-6485
holidaygroup.com/nea

TRAVEL

Top discounts or income for a teacher that loves travel:www.teacherstudent travelvalues.com

IRELAND EDUCATIONAL TOURS
Located Dingle Peninsula Kerry
Email: Marcjeh@cfu.net

To place a Marketplace advertisement...
All ads must be accompanied by a completed and signed Insertion Order and appropriate payment. You can request an Insertion Order at:

- adsales@nea.org
- FAX: (202) 822-7377
- Phone: (202) 822-7260

Rates:
Basic classified rate is $120 per line with a 3-line minimum per ad. A line consists of 30 characters, including space and punctuation.

Display ad prices are based on $800 per column inch.

Frequency or member discounts available. Complete pricing information is outlined on the Insertion Order.

Contact:
NEA Marketing & Information Services
1201 16th St., N.W., Ste. 514
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 822-7260

Canadian Rockies Offers 'Cool' Vacation

Travel with other teachers departing July 20, 2008.

Fly to Sioux Falls for a scenic three-day drive to Calgary, Alberta. Visit Fargo and Bismarck, ND; Saskatchewan; and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Academy. Highlights include Lake Louise; Banff National Park; ride a SnoCoach over the Columbia Ice Fields; Canmore, Alberta; Waterton Lakes National Park; Kananaskis Country; Helena and Billings MT; Custer's battlefield; Black Hills National Forest; historic Deadwood; Mt. Rushmore and Crazy Horse National Memorial; legendary Badlands National Park; and more! Includes 13 nights hotels, baggage handling, and lots of sightseeing. $1148 per person, double occupancy; airfare is extra.

For information and brochure call 7 days a week:

***YMT* Vacations 1-800-736-7300**

WEB SITE GIVEAWAY

NEW!

Register to win the NEA Member Benefits Monthly Web Site Giveaway!

LEAP FROG SCHOOLHOUSE

...a chance to win one of three **$100 Gift Certificates from LeapFrog!**

Just log onto the NEA Member Benefits Web Site at **neamb.com**
No purchase necessary.

Giveaway opens 12:00 am, ET, November 1, 2007, and ends 11:59 pm, ET, November 30, 2007.

nea Member Benefits
neamb.com

WRITING OUTSIDE THE BOX

Don't be your students' only reader. BY ERICA JACOBS

IF THE CLASSROOM IS A BOX, then it's no surprise that focusing "outside the box" improves the quality of writing. I see this every year when my seniors write college essays. Having that outside audience gives their prose an entirely new dimension.

Students have done some brilliant writing "inside the box" too, but at a certain point, they get sick of pleasing teacher after teacher and are ready to set their sights on the outside world.

Writing is, paradoxically, both very personal and extremely sociable. When we know our writing will go "public"—whether it's an interdepartmental memo or a first novel—our desire for excellence increases.

I learned this nearly 30 years ago at a retreat sponsored by the Northern Virginia Writing Project, whose philosophy is that students and teachers are writers preparing for a common goal: publication in the form of reading aloud or duplication in print. The retreat opened up a new world in which my "voice" was heard, appreciated, even applauded.

I couldn't wait to type up some of the scribbles I had produced and become one of the thousands of freelance writers who send in unsolicited articles. That weekend, I went from being a writing teacher to a writer.

> "When we know our writing will go 'public'...our desire for excellence increases."

That's exactly what we want for our students. We want them to be bitten by the bug, to realize that a single turn of phrase might elicit a chuckle, guffaw, or even a tear. We want them to fall in love with language and appreciate that literature is not just a subject—it's a craft.

Since that weekend, I have had many opportunities to help my students "publish." In ninth-grade classes, I have organized editorial groups where students become magazine editors and review submissions, making corrections and suggestions. This works best when you have more than one class so the submissions can be anonymous.

This year, in an interdisciplinary Advanced Placement class I co-teach, we asked students to submit essays to a "Being an American" contest sponsored by the Bill of Rights Institute. The essays we received were their best writings of the year.

An eleventh-grade teacher I know asks her students to write children's books and deliver them to a local elementary school; the reaction from the children who receive books made especially for them is an unprecedented high point for her teenagers, who suddenly feel very adult and important.

Last year, Lucy Young entered Oprah Winfrey's high school writing contest on the relevance of Elie Wiesel's *Night* in today's world. Of 50,000 entries, hers was one of 50 top essays, and she appeared on the Oprah show with the other winners and the author. She went home with a $10,000 scholarship and priceless memories.

When our class watched a tape of that show, we all vicariously felt the thrill and admired the double tribute to language as she and the other winners wrote powerfully about the power of Wiesel's memoir. Lucy then read her winning essay to our class, tracing in words her revelation that the evils Wiesel wrote about still take place today. She concludes, "But tears shed for those departed are also tears for hope—hope that we, as humans, will eventually learn from our mistakes and boldly confront evil. That is *Night*'s blessing."

After the applause, we celebrated with a cake inscribed with "I Love Lucy."

Whether teachers simply ask students to read their pieces aloud to one another or their parents, or photocopy poems for a class project, directing student writing to the outside world gives an assignment extra weight and breadth.

We may strive to make "inside the box" activities valuable and engaging, but "outside the box," the grass is always greener.

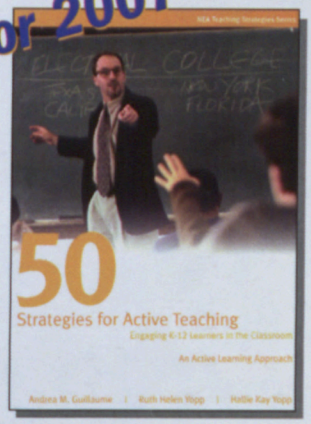
Erica Jacobs teaches English at George Mason University and Oakton High School in Virginia and writes a weekly column on education for *The Examiner* newspaper.

PHOTO: PATRICK RYAN

NEED A FEW GREAT APPROACHES TO CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION?

Here are 135 Designed Just for You!

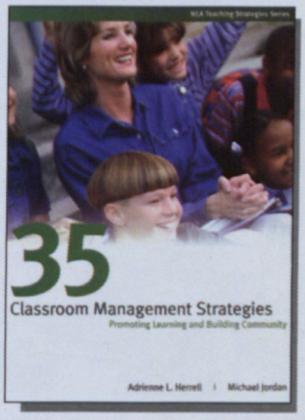
NEW for 2007



50 Strategies for Active Teaching: Engaging K-12 Learners in the Classroom

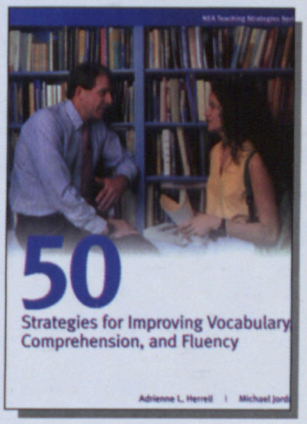
Provide a challenging classroom environment for your students by giving them a sense of ownership with their own learning. Fifty strategies are covered in this 263-page book, including; lesson preparation, implementation, alternatives and time allotment. Also includes 32 printable resource templates on CD-ROM.

Non-Member Price: $21.95 + S&H
Member Price: $19.95 + S&H
Item# 0694100-NT1107



35 Classroom Management Strategies offers real-life strategies for creating a classroom community conducive to learning—a dozen of which are illustrated on an accompanying DVD.

Non-Member Price: $21.95 + S&H
Member Price: $19.95 + S&H
Item#0693300-NT1107



This 246-page second edition offers new *50 Strategies for Improving Vocabulary, Comprehension and Fluency* to develop key literacy skills. Authentic Classroom examples are provided on the accompanying CD.

Non-Member Price: $29.95 + S&H
Member Price: $25.95 + S&H
Item#0692500-NT1107

Just call **800-229-4200**
and ask about all of our
Professional Library Bookstore Publications

nea NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION nea.org
Great Public Schools for Every Child

VISA MasterCard

0%

Intro APR† for 12 billing cycles on Balance Transfers and Cash Advance Checks

The NEA RateSmart℠ Credit Card – one of the lowest rates anywhere

- **0% Introductory APR** for 12 billing cycles on balance transfers and cash advance checks
- **No transaction fee** if you transfer your balances when applying (a 3% transaction fee, no less than $5, applies to any other balance transfer or cash advance check)
- **No annual fee**

NEA members can also enjoy a low 7.75% APR† on all purchases with the NEA RateSmart Credit Card.

(See below for APR information on the NEA School Days Credit Card.)

Apply now: call 1-888-758-7946

(TTY users: 1-800-833-6262) Mention priority code FABQYU.

nea Member Benefits
neamb.com

Brought to you by:
Bank of America

†The Annual Percentage Rate (APR) for Purchases, Balance Transfers, and Cash Advance Checks is a variable rate, currently 7.75% for NEA RateSmart accounts, or 17.74% for NEA School Days accounts. The account you receive will be determined based on your creditworthiness. The APR for Bank and ATM Cash Advances is a variable rate, currently 19.74% for both NEA RateSmart and NEA School Days accounts. The current Introductory APR for Balance Transfers and Cash Advance Checks is 0% through your first 12 statement Closing Dates. Keep in mind if your payment is late or your balance exceeds the credit limit, the Introductory APR will end before the advertised expiration date. Transaction fee for Bank and ATM Cash Advances, and for purchases of wire transfers and other cash equivalents is 3% (min. $5, max. $125). Transaction fee for Balance Transfers and Cash Advance Checks is 3% (min. $5, max. $125). Transaction fees will be waived on balance transfers requested at the time of application. Transaction fee for any transaction made in a foreign currency: 1% of the U.S. Dollar amount of each such transaction. We reserve the right to change the Variable APRs in our discretion, including, for example, the margins. If your account has balances that are subject to different APRs, your payments are applied to the balance with the lowest APR before any payments are applied to balances with higher APRs. This means that balances with higher APRs are not reduced until balances with lower APRs have been paid off. Balance Transfers may not be used to pay off or pay down any account issued by FIA Card Services, N.A. For more information about the rates, fees, other costs, and benefits associated with the use of these credit cards, call the telephone number appearing above. This credit card program is issued and administered by FIA Card Services, N.A. MasterCard is a federally registered service mark of MasterCard International Inc., and is used by the issuer pursuant to license. Bank of America and the Bank of America logo are registered trademarks of Bank of America Corporation.

©2007 Bank of America Corporation

CCNT1107